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Edited by AUSTIN HARRISON

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Edited by Austin Harrison

CONTENTS OF THE ONE-HUNDRED-AND-FORTY-FOURTH NUMBER

		PAGE
1. W. H. STEPHENS	To the Unknown Flower	385
2. JOHN HELSTON	Pagan	386
3. HAROLD BLIND	A Dream	387
4. MURIEL STUART	Mrs. Effingham's Swan Song	388
5. JOAN BEVAN	While Waiting in Your Room	391
6. VLADIMIR NABOKOFF	Remembrance	392
7. MARY WEBB	When The Thorn Blows	392
8. F. HAMILTON	Eve	393
9. FORD MADOX HUEFFER	Thus to Revisit...(iv)	395
10. ROBERT BRIFFAULT	We	405

[*Contents continued on page* x.

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CONTENTS (*continued*)

		PAGE
11. ALGERNON BLACKWOOD	Chinese Magic	416
12. CONSTANCE MALLESON	Letters: Posted and Unposted (iii)	425
13. S. H. McGRADY	The Socialist	431
14. STEPHEN SOUTHWOLD	The Poet's Allegory	435
15. W. L. WILLIAMS	The Recognition of Mr. H. A. Barker	436
16. ALBERT GARCIA	Decadence in Singing	442
17. AUSTIN HARRISON	After Two Years of Peace	447
18. AUSTIN HARRISON	Credit or Bankruptcy	455
19. HENRY WILLIAMSON	The Night	462
20. THOMAS MOULT	The Decline of Literary Criticism	466
21. JOHN PEELER	Charwomen, not "Balbrigands"	470
22. S.O.	When Ghosts Fail	473
23.	Books	476

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By H. Dennis Bradley

SUDDENLY, a week or so back, without warning, without opportunity for deliberation, without escape for thoughtful preparation, I was faced with a fundamental, political, psychological, emotional, humanitarian, Christian, international, financial and economic problem.

A German walked into my office in Bond Street. What was a patriotic Britisher to do? Should I throw my beautiful but weighty bronze Cupid at his head? Should I telephone the "Daily Mail"? Should I acquaint the Welsh Wizard, or should I seek the assistance of Scotland Yard?

I had to think quickly. It was seven years since we had met. He was then as anti-militarist as I am now. And he, no more than tens of millions of other Germans, was certainly not responsible for the rulers of Germany plunging Europe into war.

Now, I am not pro-German, or, as a rule, pro-anything, except pro-self, but I solved the problem by asking him to have a whisky and soda. Deplorable anti-Pussyfootism!

He had fought throughout the war and was one of the fighting few lucky enough to escape death or maiming. There was no bravery or virtue in this. He was compelled, like al other young men in all the belligerent countries, to fight or be shot at dawn. He loathed the disgusting bestiality as all—who did not organise it—loathed it.

He told me he had ordered from my firm one suit of clothes.

A few days later he looked in to say "good-bye." He said, "That suit of clothes will have to last me at least five years. It has cost me over £200."

I was amazed to find myself the chief of a gang of brigands, until he explained that he had been charged about £16, which, on the rate of exchange in German marks, had cost him the equivalent of £200.

* * * * * * *

Here is a big economic problem. Unless one is decadent or sentimental one must face facts. It is two years since the Armistice was signed. Is it to be peace or war? Is Britain to trade freely and internationally and recover, or remain revengefully and stupidly insular and go under? Shall we be Roman or renascent? Shall we skin-alive or resuscitate? I merely put the question since I am a philosophical individualist.

But the whole financial system of Europe is really one unit, and it is now in utter chaos. Britain must trade with her late enemies, the Central Powers, and she must trade with her late ally, Russia. If national bankruptcy is to be avoided it must not be next year but at once. And from all the signs, America is likely to be a stern creditor.

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THE
ENGLISH REVIEW
NOVEMBER, 1920.

To the Unknown Flower

By W. H. Stephens

ONE day I found you growing in the hedge
Uncouth, with wayward sprawlings left and right,
The stems upclimbing through a branchy hedge
Then thrusting through to meet the air and light;
I knew you were
A stranger, stranded there!

Some dagger leaves were rayed about the stem,
So dry and dusty that you looked forlorn,
But you had curled, and made a diadem
Of emerald sprays a Queen might well have worn,
Young leaves benight
With filtered emerald light!

And thus I loved the beauty of your sprays
That trailed in glory, gently quivering;
And often came to watch your gipsy ways,
And thrilled one day to see a wondrous thing,—
A Star, between
The rifts of cloudy green!

A little spike of tiny flowers was there,
Each flower a perfect star of silver mist;
And from each misty petal, passing fair
Arose a dainty Stamen to be kissed
By zephyr lips
On blushing powdered tips!

Maybe the golden glamour of the kiss
  Would fall upon a Carpel's yearning heart,
And in the sweet fruition of its bliss
  Create the seed of Nature's secret art,
    With life sublime
    To phase in quickening time.

So much, O wayward plant, of Life's Romance
  Lies here in prickly leaves and dusty stems
With patience longing for an utterance,
  Until it bursts in coruscating gems
    Of Nature's glee
    And primal mystery.

Pagan

By John Helston

A BRIGHTNESS stirs by the water's edge,
As beautiful as the feet of Spring
By the willowed pool with its banks of ling
When west winds rule at its whispering.

A darkness whirs from a cove of sedge.

Ere one can cry: "What means the thing!"
A crow and a sea-gull strive in flight
As they wheel together to left and right.

But if your soul, from dark or shine,
Turn but to grey,
A ghost that's in your spine
Shall take away
Your sins and Springs,—
Ay, cut your wings
For good and evil in that day!

A Dream

By Harold Blind

I DREAMED
This rain-chilled morning, ere I woke.
It seemed
Your sweet lithe nakedness against my heart was pressed;
And the slow restless fever in my blood had broke.
We drowsed, united; and the Gods had blessed
The spiritual marriage that the mysterious fusion
Of our flesh expressed.

It seemed
So real, the exquisitely warm and fragrant touch
Of you; and I could feel your soft, swift kiss
Cling to my mouth—your hands hold mine.
I dreamed.
Would it not mean much
If we could live for ever, linked . . . like this?

If this were "life eternal"—as it well might be
For those who love each other, living pure in heart, and great;
Then I, for one, would never fear the gulf Eternity
To which men go through Death's star-curtained gate.

Mrs. Effingham's Swan Song

By Muriel Stuart

I AM growing old: I have kept youth too long,
But I dare not let them know it now.
I have done the heart of youth a grievous wrong,
Danced it to dust and drugged it with the rose,
Forced its reluctant lips to one more vow.
I have denied the lawful grey,
So kind, so wise, to settle in my hair;
I am friends no more with April, but September has not
taught me her repose;
I wish I had let myself grow old in the quiet way
That is so gracious . . . I wish I did not care . . .

My faded mouth will never flower again,
Under the paint the wrinkles fret my eyes,
My hair is dull beneath its henna stain,
I have come to the last ramparts of disguise,
And now the day draws on of my defeat.
I shall not meet
The swift, male glance across the crowded room,
Where the chance contact of limbs in passing has
Its answer in some future fierce embrace.
I shall sit there in the corners looking on
With the older women, withered or overblown,
Who have grown old more graciously than I,
In a sort of safe and comfortable tomb
Knitting myself into Eternity.
And men will talk to me because they are kind,
Or as cunning or as courtesy demands;
There will be no hidden question in their eyes
And no subtle implication in their hands,
And I shall be so grateful who have been
So gracious and so tyrannous, moving between
Denial and surrender. To-morrow I shall find
How women live who have no lovers and no answer for
life's grey monotonies.

MRS. EFFINGHAM'S SWAN SONG

Upon my table will be no more flowers . . .
They will bring me no more flowers till I am dead;
There will be no violent, sweet, exciting hours,
No wild things done nor said.
—No master is more bitter to offend,
No tyranny more dreadful to obey,
Than Beauty's terrible bondage. Happy they
Whom she brings not in anguish to the end
Of her old, magnificent way.

Yet sometimes I'm so tired of it all—
This everlasting battle with the flesh,
—This pitiful slavery to the body's thrall—
And then I do not want to lure nor charm;
I want to wear
Soft, easy things, be comfortable and warm;
I want to drowse at leisure in my chair.
I do not want to wear a veil with heavy mesh,
Nor sit in shaded rooms afraid to face the light;
I do not want to go out every night,
And be bright and vivid and intense,
Nor be on the alert and the defence
With other women, fierce and afraid as I,
Drawing a knife unseen as each goes by.

I am so tired of men and making love,
For every one's the same.
There's nothing new in love beneath the sun . . .
All love can say or do has long been said and done:
I have eaten the fruit of knowledge long enough,
Been over-kissed, and over-praised and over-won.
Why should I try to play still the old, foolish game?
Because I have played the rose's part too long.
Who plays the rose must pay the rose's price,
And be a rose or nothing till it dies.
And even then sometimes the blood will answer fierce and strong
To the old hunger,—to the old dance, old tune;
I shall feel cruel and passionate and mad
Though I have lost the look of June.
The fever of the past will burn my hands

As men who live long in intemperate lands
Feel the old ague wring them, far removed
From the lost, cruel glitter of seas and sands . . .
The rose dies hard in women who have had
Lovers all their lives, and have been much loved.

I am afraid to grow old now even if I would.
I have fought too long, too well, and what was once
A foolish trick to make the rose more strangely gay
Is now a close-locked, mortal conflict of brain and blood—
A feud too old to settle or renounce.
I shall grow too tired to struggle, and the fight will end,
And they will enter in at last—
Nature and Time, long thwarted of their prey,—
Those old grey two, more cruel for the lips that said them
"Nay"—
For the bitterest foe is he who in the past
Has been repulsed when he would fain be friend.

I am sorry for women who are growing old,
I do not blame them holding youth with shameful hold,
Nor doing desperate things to lips and eyes.
They have so pitifully short a flowering time,
So suddenly sweet a story so soon told.
They only strive to keep what men have taught them most
to prize—
Men who have longer, fuller lives to live,
Who are not stopped and broken in their prime,
With their faces still to summer. Men do not know
What Age says to a woman. *They* would not wait
To feel slip from their hands without a throe,
Without a struggle, futile and desperate,
Doomed, without hope or rumour of reprieve,
All that has given them wealth and love and power.
They would not smile into the eyes of that advancing hour,
(Who had bent all summer to their bow, and had flung
The widest rose and kissed the keenest mouth
And slept in the lordliest bed when they were young,)
That bitter twilight which sun-following Youth
Flies headlong while Age loiters on the hill,
Uneager to fold such greyness to his breast,

Knowing that none will thwart him of his will,
None be before him on that quest.

I am growing old.
I was not always kind when I was young
To women who were old, for Youth is blind—
A small, green, bitter thing beneath its fragrant rind,
And fanged against the old with boisterous tongue—
Those whose poor, morning heads are touched with rime,
Walking before their misery like kings,
In exile from their green and growing time.
I did not think that I should feel such stings,
Nor flinch beneath such arrows . . . But now I know.
One day I shall be stupid and rather slow,
And easily cowed and troubled in my mind,
And tremulous, vaguely frightened, feeble and cold.
I am growing old . . . My God, how old! how old! . . .
I dare not tell them, but one day they will know . . .
I hope they will be kind.

While Waiting in Your Room

By Joan Bevan

Each time you enter, goes my heart to meet you,
Though I stand still and look quite commonplace.
And silent, long with fevered words to greet you
While secretly I search your shadowed face . . .

To see if there's a gleam of more than kindness
Or if indifference only wins the race;
Or cruelty, another form of blindness,
Hides all the mocking beauty of your face.

When will there be an answer to my pleading?
Will your eyes mate with mine a breathing space
And drowned in deepest depths will they be reading
Their utter satisfaction on your face?

Remembrance

By Vladimir Nabokoff

Like silent ships we two in darkness met,
And when some day the poet's careless fame
Shall breathe to you a half-forgotten name—
Soul of my song, I want you to regret.

For you had Love. Out of my life you tore
One shining page. I want, if we must part,
Remembrance pale to quiver in your heart
Like moonlit foam upon a windy shore.

When the Thorn Blows

By Mary Webb

Dawn glimmers white beyond the burning hill
Where sunbeams light a fire in every tree.
The morning bird is singing clear and shrill;
And oh, my love! when will you come to me?

The daisies whitely sleep beneath the dew;
On the wet road the stones are fair to see;
Cloudy, the blackthorn floats upon the blue;
And oh, my love! when will you come to me?

The wind came walking in the shaken wood;
He shouted from the mountains and the sea.
By the pale thorn he paused, in lover's mood—
And oh, my love! when will you come to me?

My heart has blossomed meekly as the thorn;
It has its dews, and daisies two or three.
The heavens quicken, green as April corn—
And oh, my love! when will you come to me?

Eve

(To the Lord God)

By F. Hamilton

Behind me is the garden and your face.
Shame might have hid me. I could bid disgrace
Banish my soul unto some distant place,
Be witch thereof, and in its shades construe
Some liane, epiphyte, that might rid you,
Sow seed, with each heart-patter, drop and drop,
Careless but they fell slow to—insure the crop.

That is my dream, indulgence, one perfume,
To dig the trench about your feet. One bloom—
To see you rid—I cherish for my tomb.
How should you tell, when my hand grasps your hands,
And bends your knees as boughs with the winds bands,
I wist but of some flower within your hair
One day to be. These sweating hands nowhere.

Let be. A gardener thou needest not.
Then why keep me? One thing, thy love cannot,
Is left for me to do. You had forgot.
'Twere sweet to do, intoxicating sweet,
If drinking should rid you, drain from your feet
All poison. God, what? Damn me. What if sap—
One drop—should, thereby, trickle from your lap?

Rather than that, there keep me, hold me there,
Burning my back with kisses. Truth it were,
That, horrible, yet not as thine impair.
Do what is best for thee.—Ha! ha! You see,
You cannot damn me. Seeing that must be
I cannot be cast down. Neither can I,
For the elation of thy living, die.

So, you would make of me, a monument,
Never to be wiped out, and never rent,
And all this, just because I do repent.—
If I did not, you might grow free—(Ah! say
Were't thou not much more fair a thing, that way?)
I reap.—That forfeited?—Then lest I might,
Rivet the chain that keeps me in thy sight.

But, of that tree of knowledge—Know this, God.
What fruit of knowledge were there but the pod
Concealed a way of treading where God trod?
So did I think, so pondered, and so said,
When the yet unproved thing had not yet bled.
So said. So say. There, damn me, God, again.
I tasted, I know, wisdom, in its chain.

I know the good and evil? As I live,
I'd yield no little anguish, through a sieve,
To lose this "what is what," "what for," you give.—
I willed to know, lay hands on all that stood
Between us, I might see, for bad or good,
What would remain, of all things, still unshaken,
What thing would fall, and what thing might be taken.

And I know now what did befall. But thee,
Now I shall never know, shall never see.—
What! Wished I thee presented unto me?
Nay, I'd not aught of thee, taken at gift.
But be thou whole. Damn me. I'd even lift
This hand unto the tree of life, to throw
One grain of spice, to make thy savour grow.

Thus to Revisit* . . . (iv)

Some Reminiscences

By Ford Madox Hueffer

Part II

The Battle of the Poets.

I.—("*Golly! What a Paper!*")

I ask to be taken as writing the pages that follow with some diffidence. When it is a matter of prose I know what I want; I know what I want to say; and I know that I can say what I want to say with some exactness. Prose is for me an instrument—like a tool of precision. But the moment I come to want to write about verse I feel—possibly doubts, possibly misgivings; certainly some of the diffidence of the novice. For I suppose that until lately I had not devoted to the problem of verse any of the close and sedulous thought that gives a man a real right to demand to be listened to. I began to think about verse desultorily about 1912; it was not until 1915 or 1916, during the enforced waitings of a life sometimes of rather frenzied action, that I devoted really the whole of my æsthetic mind to the practical side of verse-writing. I made, that is to say, a great number of metrical experiments of my own and thought constantly of the metrical devices that had been adopted by the writers of works that had given me that high, fine pleasure that poems alone can give. And, since that troubled time, I have continued in the same habits.

I should like to make a confession of faith: I believe the conception—and if possible the writing—of poetry to be the only pursuit worthy of a serious man, unless the vicissitudes of his time call on him to be also a soldier. I have always held this belief; I have never changed in it; I trust

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that I never shall. I do not mean to say that there are no other pursuits, professions, callings or avocations that Destiny may not force upon a proper man and he endure them with dignity, honour and an unbent head . . . But even then, if he does not follow them in the spirit of a poet —and with the self-sacrifice of a soldier—he is not a proper man and I hope I may never have to know him.

But, until the earlier date that I have given above, although I never faltered in this belief, the only writings, at any rate of my own day, that I could call poetry had been in the form of prose, not of verse. When—so very occasionally!—in some of the writings of the Poet Laureate, of Mr. Walter Delamare, of Christina Rossetti, of Robert Browning, I came across passages that stirred me with an unmistakable call, it was the prose quality of those passages, not the metrical values, to which I attached importance. It was the beauty of the wording; it was the beauty of the image evoked by the contact of simple words one beside the other.

Of that earlier time I remember images called up by two living poets. The one rendered distant ships, like silver-points on a grey horizon: that was Mr. Delamare; the other made visible the depths of still fresh water, beside the piles of a boating stage—on the Thames, I should say. That was in a poem by Mr. Robert Bridges. I do not mean to say that I cannot remember other passages of these two poets; I can. I believe I could recite several poems by each of them, with possibly a verbal error here and there.

And just, as far as I am concerned, as it is with these two living poets, so it is with the two dead ones. Christina Rossetti was an infinitely great master of words, but the emotions her work always gave me were those of reading prose—and so it was with Browning . . . I have seldom received a greater stirring of enthusiasm than on the day when—quite late in life—I first came upon the words, at the end of the first paragraph of the "Flight of the Duchess . . .":

And all this is our Duke's Country!

And that is certainly a prose effect and a prose rhythm. But isn't it glorious? . . . So that, only the other day, I surprised myself by saying to Mr. Pound, the words coming out from some subconscious depths where I did not know

that the opinion lay: "After all—the only English poet that matters twopence is Browning!" I don't know what Mr. Pound answered; I very seldom do know what Mr. Pound answers; but he neither knocked me down nor screamed, so that I daresay he was substantially in agreement with myself . . .

I will try to make clear how this progression of effect has taken place in my thoughts. I was unconscious that it had taken place, as I have said; but the idea having, as it were, reported itself for duty, I can trace its genesis. I trust I may be allowed to repeat myself—I mean to repeat ideas that I have already put into print. I never came across any trace that any human soul had ever read any of my former critical writings; by certain reverberations I can now tell that I have some readers, so I will again make the statement that for a great number of years I could not read "poetry." I wanted to; but I could not. I used to put that down to the fact that rhymes, accents, stresses, assonances, alliterations, vowel colourings, and the other devices of poets, embarrassed me as a reader. But this was not the case . . . The real fact is that—the dog it was that died.

I have discovered this for myself from my own practice in verse. I found that as soon as I came to write a "poem" I automatically reduced my intelligence to the level of one nearly imbecile. And, looking one day through the Collected Edition of my own poems that some misguided publisher issued some years ago and that no soul appeared to purchase or read—looking them through again, then, I was appalled to observe that in the whole affair there were not twenty lines that, had I been writing prose, I should not have suppressed . . . Everything; every single group of words was what in French is called *chargé* . . . It was not so much that the stuff was rhetorical; it had not the marmoreal quality of true rhetoric—the kind that one finds on tombstones, It was just silly—with the silliness of a child of a bad type.

Heaven knows I cannot read my own prose with anything but mortification—but it is a mortification proceeding rather from the eternal sense of failure that every conscious artist must feel all his life unless he has a good bottle of wine beneath his waistcoat . . . One has had ideals and has fallen short. That is gloomy enough. But when I read

my own verse I know that I have *tried* to write like a brandified sentimentalist. And I have succeeded every time . . .

Now, why is this? I can assure the reader that alcoholism has very little to do with it. And I think I can give the answer. It is simply that every poet—until lately every poet—the moment he takes pen in hand in order to write, say, a sonnet or a triolet or decasyllables, rhymed or unrhymed, at once begins to "write down." This was the case originally, simply because rhyme and metre were difficult things and an indulgent, primitive Public made allowances. Nowadays the writing down has become a habit, a fashion, a necessity—and a less primitive, less indulgent public can no longer be got to listen to Verse at all. At any rate there is hardly a poet of to-day or yesterday who ever, in his matter, his ideas and his verbal texture, attempts to soar above the level of the intellect of scarcely adolescent pupils in young ladies' seminaries—hardly ever a poet who, in his verse, attempts to render a higher type of mentality than that to be found in a Grimm's Fairy Tale . . . Or it might be more just to say Hans Andersen; for, as far as I can remember, Andersen was more of a snob than Grimm.

Poets in fact, once they put on their laurel crowns, divest themselves of every shred of humour, irony, or incisive knowledge of life as it is lived. I can hardly think of any save Heinrich Heine, Browning—and sometimes Christina Rossetti—who were born since 1790 and did not consider verse-writing as something aloof from life, art, form and language. I will put the matter as a parable: the facts that follow are not exactly what happened. One must slightly obscure facts when one is writing of one's contemporaries. But the truth of this parable to the Spirit of the Age is irrefutable.

There are in the City of London, then, two eminent *littérateurs* . . . Let us call them Messrs. X. and Y. Both are men of brains, humour, and of a sufficient adroitness to have made for themselves comfortable careers—this last being no easy task and one which must have made them acquainted with a considerable surface of such life as is lived in what Henry James used to call the *bas fonds* of journalism . . . A pretty mean life . . . But, in an evil hour, each of these gentlemen con-

ceived the idea of writing Verse on a large scale. One—Mr. X.—produced a play in rhyme—a play of singular imbecility. Mr. Y. replied with a slice of an epic based on ideas that must have been Joe Millerisms to Macaulay's —or was it Mrs. Barbauld's?—New Zealander.

Each was a Reviewer! Mr. Y. reviewed his colleague's verse drama, writing a sort of paraphrase of Sheridan's *Critic*—the Spanish Fleet Mr. X.'s heroine could not have seen because it was not yet in sight, and so on. Mr. X. reviewed the instalment of the epic, in the style of Macaulay's review of Satan Montgomery. He pointed out that it is contrary to natural principles to write

> Thus to its goal the aspiring soul doth mount
> As streams meander level with their fount,

or words to that effect. We were, in fact, presented with the inspiring spectacle of a controversy in the good old style of *The Edinburgh* versus *The Quarterly Reviews*. That, of course, is nothing. Someone in England is always trying to drag literature back to those days and that tone. The point was that Mr. X. concluded his review by saying that, though he had, regretfully, pointed out some of the innumerable absurdities contained in Mr. Y.'s epic, nevertheless Mr. Y. was to be congratulated on revealing his real personality in his work—an exhibition of courage rare in the poets of to-day; Mr. Y., at the end of his review, stated that though he had regretfully pointed out some of the innumerable imbecilities contained in his *confrère's* poetic drama, Mr. X. was to be congratulated on his rare courage in revealing his true personality in his poem . . . And, since each gentleman had called the other's work a product of an imbecile mind, that was hitting below the belt!

As I read the portents of our moonlit heavens, these two—quite imaginary—gentlemen will be united on one point—they desire to drive out of Literature Mr. Pound, Mr. Flint, and most of my favourite poets. And I beg the reader to believe that nothing would have dragged me back into the Literary Life from which I had taken a quite sincere farewell but the desire to prevent this infamy and this disaster. I should like to be taken as being entirely sincere in making this statement, and I should like to say that I have written the last three words, advisedly, after due thought and selecting exactly the words that express my meaning . . .

II

I concluded the first part of this series of articles by lightly, and, I trust, good-humouredly, grazing the subject of Les Jeunes, who were quite young in the Season of 1914. I fancy the frame of mind of myself and the others who welcomed these then eccentric creatures was one of gentle bewilderment as to their products combined with an absolute confidence in the genius of the various young men whom we backed. I may point out that I come of a family that, for generations, has impoverished itself in combating Academicism and in trying to help—geniuses . . . So I may claim to have in the blood the tic of combating Academicism and the hope of discovering genius—and, I trust, the faculty of absolute indifference to my personal fate or the fate of my own work.

Thus I profess to a certain inherited *flair* for—and a certain sense that it is a duty to forward—the recognition of young men with, to change the idiom, individualities, practising one or other of the arts. And towards the end of Marwood's and my career in control of the ENGLISH REVIEW, he and I and the few friends who were interested in a real revival of Literature began to feel that life was worth living . . . There appeared on the scene—I place them in the order of their appearance, as far as I can remember—Mr. Pound, Mr. D. H. Lawrence, Mr. Tomlinson, Mr. Norman Douglas, Mr. Lewis, "H.D.," Mr. Flint—and afterwards some Americans—Mr. Frost, Mr. T. S. Eliot, Mr. Edgar Lee Masters. And of course there were Gaudier Brzeska and Mr. Epstein. It was—truly—like an opening world . . .

It was like an opening world . . . For, if you have worried your poor dear old brain for at least a quarter of a century over the hopelessness of finding, in Anglo-Saxondom, any traces of the operation of a conscious art—it was amazing to find these young creatures not only evolving theories of writing and the plastic arts, but receiving in addition an immense amount of what is called "public support" . . . I do not think I am exaggerating when I say that, at any rate for the London Season of 1914, these young fellows not only drove the old—oh, the horribly wearisome!—Academics out of the field, the market, and

the forum; they created for themselves also a "public" that had never looked at a book otherwise than to be bored with it; or considered the idea that an Art was an interesting, inspiring, or amusing appearance. That was extraordinarily valuable. And I believe that their influence at that date extended across the Atlantic itself and that there it still obtains.

We Anglo-Saxons are the mock of the world: there is no nation that does not despise us for our commercial ideals, our incredible foreign politics—and the complete absence of any art as a national characteristic . . . The Dutch have their painters; the Flemings have their down-to-the-ground poets of mysticism; the Germans have their Romantic music; their Grimmish lyrics. The French have everything. The Siamese have their beautiful pots; the Russians—again, possibly everything. The Poles have immense rhetorical gifts; the Zulus their folk song; the Irish their Historic Sense, which is an art too. We have nothing, and there is no race in the world that does not point the finger of scorn at us.

That is the lamentable fact. But in 1914 Les Jeunes had succeeded in interesting a usually unmoved but very large section of the public—and had forced that public to take an interest not in the stuff but the methods of an Art. The Cubists, Vorticists, and the others proclaimed that the plastic arts must be non-representational; the Imagistes, Symbolistes, who joined up, I think, with Vorticism, proclaimed the immense importance of the "live" word—the word that should strike you as the end of a live wire will, if you touch it. Actually, I fancy that the main point of their sympathy and contact was their desire to impress on the world their own images. Or, let us put it that the first point of their doctrine would be that the artist should express by his work his own personality.

Let us consider this canon with some seriousness.

The Impressionists—and it was the Impressionists that the Vorticists, Cubists, Imagistes, and the rest were seeking to wipe out—the Impressionists in the plastic or written arts had been the leaders of the Movement that came immediately before these young fellows. And the main canon of the doctrine of Impressionism had been this: The artist must aim at the absolute suppression of himself in his ren-

dering of his Subject. You were to see as little as possible of the image of M. Courbet in a Courbet; you were to see nothing at all of Flaubert when you read "Trois Contes." To look at a painting of willow trees under a grey sky; to read *Cœur Simple* or *Le Rouge et le Noir*, *What Maisie Knew* or *Fathers and Children*, was merely to live in the lives and the minds of Felicité, Mrs. Wicks, whose constant dread was that she might be "spoken to," or of Lavretsky . . . Above all the reader was to receive no idea of the figures of Stendhal or his followers . . . For Impressionism begins with Henri Beyle who wrote as Stendhal.

Let me—since even the first commandment of Impressionism is probably unfamiliar to the Anglo-Saxon reader—repeat this formula in another image. That is bad Art; but I hope to be pardoned by the shades of my Masters. Is the Reader, then, conversant with the Theory of Podmore's Brother? . . . Podmore's Brother was accustomed to perform certain tricks on members of the public whilst so holding their attentions that they were quite unconscious of his actions. He talked so brilliantly that whilst his tongue moved his hands attracted no attention. It is not a very difficult trick to perform . . . If the Reader will give a box of matches to a friend and then begin to talk really enthrallingly, he will be able to take the box of matches from his friend's hands without his friend being in the least conscious that the matches have gone. Closing his discourse, he will be able to say to his friend: "Where are the matches?"—and the friend will not have any idea of their whereabouts . . . It is a trick worth performing—the tongue deceiving the eye . . .

It is a trick worth performing—because it is the Trick of Impressionism—the Impressionist writer or painter telling his story with such impressiveness that the Reader or the Observer will forget that the Impressionist is using pen or brush; just as your supposititious Friend, lost in your conversation, forgets that you take the matches from his hands . . .

The Cubists, Vorticists, Imagistes, Vers Libristes, who in 1914 seemed about to wash out us Impressionists, said simply: "All this attempt to hypnotise the Public is mere

waste of time. An Artist attracts; gets a Public or royalties from sales because he is a clever fellow. Let him begin by saying: 'I am a clever fellow . . .' And let him go on saying: 'What a fellow I am!' Conspuez the Subject! A bas all conventions of tale-telling! We, the Vorticists, Cubists, Imagistes, Symbolists, Vers Libristes, Tapagistes are the fine, young Cocks of the Walk! We and we only are the Playboys of the Western World. We and we only shall be heard" . . . They came very near it.

I remember well a walk I took once with one of my young geniuses on one side of me and Mr. Pound on the other . . . Of what Mr. Pound talked, I have no idea. He was expressing himself, in low tones, in some Transatlantic dialect. This Genius, however, was plain to hear.

"What is the sense," he said, "of all this '*justification*' of a subject that Maupassant and you and Conrad indulge in . . . You try to trick the reader into believing that he is hearing true stories . . . But you can't . . . Maupassant takes three hundred words out of a two-thousand-word conte to describe a dinner party with a doctor at it . . . And the doctor tells a story . . . Or Conrad takes twenty thousand words out of an immense novel to describe a public-house on the river at Greenwich . . . In order to '*justifier*' his story . . . It is a waste of time . . . What the public wants is Me . . . Because I am not an imbecile, like the component members of the public! . . ."

I daresay he was right . . . At any rate our Public took Mr. Lewis and "Blast"; Signor Marinetti and his immense noises, his lungs of brass; Mr. Epstein and his Rock Drill, with great seriousness and unparalleled avidity . . . And I was so much a member of the Public that I determined—very willingly, for I always detested writing—to shut up shop. I said to myself: "I will write one more book!"—a book I had been hatching for twelve years. "And then no more at all!" . . . So the Vorticists and the others proceeded on their clamorous ways . . . They abolished not only the Illusion of the Subject, but the Subject itself . . . They gave you dashes and whirls of pure colour; words washed down till they were just Mr. Pound's

Petals on a wet black bough!

Signor Marinetti shouted incredibly in the Doré Gal-

lery, and a sanguinary war was declared at the Café Royal between those youths who wore trousers of green billiard cloth and whiskers and those who did not . . . The Cabaret Club was raided by the Police, and found to be full of the wives and aged mothers of Cabinet Ministers . . . The Academic writers of the *Literary Journal*, with their incredibly dull snufflings about the placket-holes of Shelley's mistresses, paled till they had the aspect of the posters of yesterday on the walls of the year before last . . .

Alas! that was in 1914 . . . To-day they are all back again in the saddle and the gobbling noises about the tuberculous lungs of Keats,—a beautiful user of words who, had Destiny not been as remorseless to his poor shade as in life she was to his racked body, would have escaped the attention of these stamp collectors—the gobbling noises about the lungs of Keats, the immense, long articles about the orthography of Shakespeare's Fourth Folios, the voluminous disquisitions on the poetasters from whom Scott derived his chapter headings—all these incredibly uninteresting matters have once more killed the interest of the Public in the Arts . . . For what, to the Public, is Fanny Brawne?

I will put the matter in another parable, the facts being this time true . . .

The wife of my headmaster once said to me—I was revisiting my school, and she was looking at a *Literary Journal* that I had brought down—once said, looking musingly over the top of the paper:

"'Love letters of John Keats to Fanny Brawne, edited by Buxton Forman.'" She was reading the title of a review. And she went on to ask: "Who *was* Keats?"

I said:

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever . . .

And immediately she continued:

Its loveliness increaseth; it shall never
Pass into nothingness . . .

It was not, that is to say, that the lady was closed to or ignorant of the beauty of Keats—it was simply that the *Literary Journal* was so intolerably wearisome that she knew nothing of the sort of ana that . . . But perhaps I am saying too much.

(*To be continued.*)

We

By Robert Briffault

Most of us can look back upon another world—that remote world which in the pigeon-holes of history is labelled Victorian. It was the air of that world which all but the youngest of us first drew into our spiritual lungs, it was by its light, or at least by the afterglow of it, that we first contemplated the wonders and the mysteries And what fresh enthusiasms, what thrills of revelation fired our souls! What a new era was the day when we first discovered Darwin! What new vision was opened to us by Sartor, by Ruskin! We were heavy with new thought as we rose from reading Spencer; Tyndall's Belfast address was an epoch in spiritual history, and we constructed views of "the relation between Mind and Matter." Our interest was aroused by the controversy between Huxley and Gladstone concerning the Gadarene swine. We learnt *Locksley Hall* and *In Memoriam* by heart, till the syncopated tempo of Browning's toccatas hushed the Tennysonian music to faintness. Liberalism, Democracy were ideals to conjure with; and the most wicked of us went the length—*horribile dictu*—of pasturing on the Fabian Essays. The discovery in art of Tintoretto and of the Primitives made us irate with our schoolmasters who had informed us that Raffael was a great painter. We thought no little of our privilege of exploring expanding horizons. We were the young ones marching to brave music with the vanguard companies into new worlds unsuspected by our fathers . . .

Heavens! What a gulf, what an abyss, between! Can it really be that *that* was our world, that back-parlour of a world from which we now blow the dust with archæological curiosity? It is not different in form, colour and fashion merely from the world in which our thoughts move to-day; it is another universe compounded of different substances, of different ultimate principles and categories. To realise,

to enter into the spirit and point of view of that Victorian world, puts a strain on our imagination as it would to stop down our vision to the outlook of a pre-Copernican or a pre-Revolutionary world.

In the material of our thought, in our knowledge, there has been since no second Darwinian revolution; the changes have been cumulative, though the cumulation amounts in some quarters to a revolution. What has happened is in reality much more momentous: the effects of Victorian, of nineteenth-century, science have spread from "nature," from the peculiar domain of that science which was called "natural"—in opposition to I know not what "unnatural" science—and which was therefore essentially distinct, remote, aloof from the general thought of thinking men, human thought dealing with human interests and issues,—the effects and spirit of science have overflowed and spread to that sphere of the thinker's thought, to Man, to Man's world. The new sciences which have sprung up are sciences of human things, anthropology in all its many branches, folk-lore, economics, and that general scientific thought concerning human society, its mechanism and institutions, which is afflicted with the barbaric name of "sociology." Science which arose as a world apart, separated from the general fields of human thought, and which in the flush of its triumph had in the nineteenth century set up its complete world-edifice without consultation and with somewhat hasty victorious finality, has now penetrated, and been in turn penetrated by, the thought of the thinker on human issues. Both have been transformed. The world-edifice has grown mellower and maturer; but it is above all the general human thought, our thought, that has became transmuted. And not in its materials, in its knowledge alone; the standards, the values, the counters themselves of the mind, are those of another currency. Changes which in turn have completely metamorphosed the import of our experience, altering the meaning of its daily contribution. So that between us and that Victorian world in the atmosphere of which we were born there is no longer any common measure. We are men of another world.

And it is that which gives the real sense of growth, of progress. Not your aeroplanes, and mechanical toys and devices; but the sight of a new world, perceived through

other organs of knowledge, spelling new meanings, and giving us a new sense of direction. That is progress. Anyone is, of course, at liberty to quiz us with the question, "How do you know that your new vision, though other than the old, is better?" A foolish question. It is not the fact that one phase of growth is "better" than the foregoing which constitutes it a progress; it is the fact that it is a progress which constitutes it "better." The values "better," "higher" are the expression, not the justification, of the fact of growth; it is the evolution which creates the value, which creates all values, not the values which justify the evolution. The knowledge of superiority is the direct judgment of evolving Life pronounced within us as the inconceivability of going back, of reversing the direction of the Life-force.

We do not despise the Victorians, or the Jacobeans, or, for that matter, the poor savages who accomplished greater things when they domesticated fire or went to sea in a tree-trunk than, probably, we thinkers shall ever accomplish. No feeling of contempt colours our retrospect; on the contrary, it is with a very lively feeling of reverence and veneration that we look upon the past generations that have raised us to our point of vantage. But it is precisely because of our sense of the superiority of our outlook that we reverence the men who have made it possible to surpass theirs. It is our truth, not necessarily our strength, that has grown. Where they were clear and confident we may be vague and hesitating, we falter where they firmly trod; but our faltering is for all that a step forward, beyond, and above their confidence. Our path in any case, the path of Life is irretraceable; the worlds that we have left behind can never again come back to being. Between them and ours there is no common measure. We have passed for ever into other worlds.

* * * * * * *

"We"? Who are "we"? Of whom am I speaking? Of the men of to-day? But we are but an infinitesimal, almost negligible number among the men of to-day. We quietly talk archæologically about those ancient inhabitants of Britain, the Victorians, and, as a matter of fact, there are a hundred thousand Victorians, young and old, living

to-day for one man of the present day, for one of us. We recall ancient memories of Darwinian days, and only the other day a good, well-meaning Canon Barnes caused a flutter by heroically suggesting that evolution should be "admitted"! Victorians! Why, the world of to-day would be a "live wire" indeed were no men to be found in it more antique than the Victorians. It is with pre-Victorian, with pre-Jacobean, nay, with pre-Glacial men that it is overwhelmingly peopled. The vast, overpowering majority of human beings, of those even who are called the "cultured," who talk articulately, perorate, write, are pre-Darwinians, pre-Frazerians, pre-Nietzscheans,—pre-diluvians. We? We, the men of to-day, are one in two millions; we are a mere handful, a contemptible little army; or, rather, a small scattered rabble. We are a minority so negligible that it would appal us to compute it by a count of heads. We speak of our thoughts, of our ideas, of our values, as the thoughts, the ideas, the values of to-day, but they are but an infinitesimal sprinkling in the midst of the multitude of surviving fossil thought.

Social growth does not take place as a whole, but at a growing-point only of negligible dimensions; while at any moment the whole represents the stratified deposits of all the past.

If only people would realise the simple and uncontrovertible fact that what we call the mind of man is a social product they would have grasped three-fourths of psychology and of social science. The fact is a truism which should be beyond the need of discussion. We think by means of ideas, concepts, as they are technically called, and not a concept can our mind seize hold of except by means of the instrument called a word. And words are socially transmitted products. Man is born a dumb animal; words, and all that words carry with them, that is, the contents of the human mind, are poured into human beings as into so many empty bottles, by the social environment. To ignore serenely and utterly that momentous, truistic fact is a postulate of the bulk of the current thought and talk of professed thinkers and of vulgar ignorance alike. People talk of "race," "individuality," "temperament," and mental endowments when discussing the mentality of human beings, entirely setting aside the fact

that that mentality is not the individual product of their minds, but of human history, of social evolution, and of the circumstances which have transmitted to them the products of that history and evolution. Men differ; they are men of to-day, Victorians, Jacobeans, Mediævals, or Troglodytes; the present population of the world and of any civilised community belongs to widely different epochs and phases of evolution. That is the real "inequality," the only real inequality. But that inequality is not at all an outcome of "race" or of any anthropological or psychological conditions, but in the fullest sense of the word an artificial product of social conditions. Into some of the empty bottles the social organism pours a Victorian mind, into others a pre-Victorian mind, into others a mind from the Dark Ages of barbaric Europe; into others it pours scarcely any mind at all, but the dim mentality of the primitive savage.

It is that inequality, of course, which gives rise to the fundamental paralogism of Democracy. The highest expression of the evolutionary forces is represented by an infinitesimal minority, and the count of heads secures the total submersion of that minority under the overwhelming preponderance of the unevolved majority. That is obvious. But that obvious reasoning overlooks one fundamental circumstance of the situation, and thereby misleads many of us into a fallacy. What the democratic tendency supplants, or tends to supplant, is not the rule of the evolutionary minority, but of quite another minority, that of the conservators of established power—not an evolutionary minority at all, but the most powerfully armed and the most obdurate reactionary and anti-revolutionary minority. Democracy, the count of heads, does not, it is true, substitute the infinitesimal evolutionary minority for the powerfully armed reactionary minority. But it does tend in fact to weaken the latter and to strengthen the former. That it weakens the latter is manifest if from nothing else than its instinctive detestation of Democracy. That it strengthens the evolutionary minority is a consequence of the fact that the general direction of that minority's tendencies must necessarily coincide, at least roughly, with that of the lowest and numerically largest strata, of the proletariat, of the workers, of the instruments of established

power. The rebellious proletarians—their mental activity necessarily means rebellion—are, from the nature of the situation, evolutionary. For two reasons. First because they are rebels, and all rebellion against established power is evolutionary, and conversely all evolution is rebellion; secondly, they are by virtue of their situation immune from the authority of the falsified values of the power-holders' tradition. Thus it is that the proletariat, the opposite cultural extreme to the aristocracy of thought, is its natural ally. However unsatisfactory and distressing direct intercourse between the two extremes may be, however limited, "coarse," artless the mentality of the proletariat, the general direction of their outlook and aims is, owing to their immunity from the crippling effect of power-thought and to the logic of their situation, in much closer harmony with that of the aristocracy of thought than that of the cultured established power. Superficial intercourse with a cultured Church dignitary, say, is far more harmonious, pleasant and congenial to us than intercourse with the roughly articulate proletarian; but in general orientation of thought it is with the latter that we shall coincide, while we shall be *toto coelo* at variance with the former. The "culture," the "education" supplied by established power in public school, university, and the literature of established power, cut both ways. By giving access to the materials of thought they incidentally furnish the instruments of evolution, but it is quite against their intention that they do so. Their object is to pour into the empty bottles every falsification and deformation that human thought has suffered at the hands of power, and to guard against the evolutionary use of the materials of thought. And it is the most concrete demonstration of the magnitude and fundamental character of those falsifications that, in the result, the "ignorant," "uncultured" proletarian is, thanks to his immunity from them, in a better position to think in terms of living and evolutionary thought than the most highly polished product of transmitted culture.

We are therefore in general democratic, however invalid to us the principle of democracy, however much at variance we may be with many of the aspects of democracy. By a curious but very natural paradox, the anti-evolutionary minority is also democratic; it is for the "principles" of

democracy that it very loudly clamours, that is, for "the rights of minorities," that is, its "rights"; just as the surviving mediæval inquisitors and religious persecutors righteously call for "toleration" in days when they themselves are in need of "toleration."

But we, we to whom Victorians, Mediævals, Troglodytes are essentially fossil, though not extinct, forms of human evolution, what are *we?*

We know one another at the first words in any interchange of thought, we know one another for kindred, for men of to-day. By an infallible freemasonry we seize at once in a man, in an article, in a book the sharp, unmistakable distinction; a man either belongs to the aristocracy of living thought or to the phantom multitude of the surviving Past; he is either one of us or he is essentially against us. In our views, in our judgments, in our estimates, we may differ widely and profoundly. It is not the colour of our opinions in philosophy, in science, in politics that makes us kin, that makes us living men of to-day. We may differ about that which is close to our hearts, about that which we deem fundamental and essential; we may diverge in diametrically opposite directions from our starting-points. But we nevertheless know and feel ourselves to belong to the same kindred of the mind, to be of a different world, of a different phase of evolution from the multitude of pseudo-living survivals. Wherein does that subtle kinship consist? Every distinction, however subtle, that is real is susceptible of definite apprehension. The mark by which we recognise one another is that our values, our judgments, our outlooks, are genuinely our own; they are living, growing realities, not bequeathed ancestral mummies moving with a simulated animation. They are not the mentality which the social environment has poured into us, but the products of our own thought. We recognise one another by our common repudiation of values and standards, which the social environment desires us to accept on its authority alone. We decline to be passive recipients of the mentality it pours into us; we demand to see the title-deeds of the thought which we admit into our minds, we repudiate all privilege and exact validity, we discard all tabus and all sanctities. That is wherein we all agree, wherein we are manifest to one

another as men whose thought is actually living, moving by virtue of its own intrinsic animation, and sharply distinguished from thought which is literally dead, haunting the daylight with semblances of that which once existed in past ages.

Our "differences of opinion," our parting of the ways; it is not those that matter. Not our conclusions, but the mode of their birth, not the errors of our views, but the spirit of our search, of our thought. I believe—I know that to many of us the belief will appear visionary, and I will not stay here to substantiate it—I believe that, given equal undeflected honesty of thought and equal access to the available materials of thought to all, "differences of opinion" must ultimately melt away, and all individual views coalesce in all essentials. In other words I believe in truth. Most of our "differences of opinion" are, after all, differences of words, of mode of expression. And it is a proof that our living thought, our will to true judgment, are adequate to their function, and that "differences of opinion" are for the most part not the outcome of any natural human imbecility, but of the adventitious permutations poured by the social environment into empty bottles, that our conclusions, our views and judgments do, as a matter of fact, generally coincide in all essentials. Victorian thought differs from mediæval thought and from living thought, but living thought differs little from living thought. It is because of the radical incompatibility between the values and standards of living thought and the deceased values and standards which the established powers of the social environment decants from the urns of the Past into passive recipients that our negligible, scattered minority is appallingly estranged, isolated in the phantasmal world of survivals, in fundamental, irreconcilable opposition to it. We are the wicked, the unpopular ones. An unpleasant situation, distressing to most of us. Most of us are in our souls overcome by the sense of our defeat, of our impotent helplessness before the insolent triumph of the forces that overwhelm us—us, contemptible little scattered army. We live under the ceaseless menace of intrinsic perils even more formidable than the giant forces against which our souls are pitted. We are lonely, terribly lonely, speaking an unintelligible language; we

are "unpopular," with all the subtle penalties that are implied by that word. And we are tempted to fail in our strength, to doubt ourselves, to dilute the living forces that actuate us, to yield and compromise, to "reconcile" our thought, to clothe and disguise it, to make it "acceptable" by a treason more deep than apostasy. And, on the other hand, if we stand true and firm, we are prone to be embittered, deeply soured by the ineffectual contest.

The fact is that in the present phase of human evolution most of us, the vast majority of our small minority, have no clear apprehension of the positive facts which we ourselves stand for; we do not know what we are. We are conscious of the abnormality of our situation, not of its profound normal reality. Inevitably in transition minds the "Nays" predominate over the "Yeas." The unveracity of the things to which we cannot assent is clear and palpable; the facts, the veracities which they have concealed from our eyes are not so immediately visible. The heaviest charge that can be brought against the falsifications of power-thought is not so much that they are false, as that they have impeded the evolution of true vision; not their direct effect as lies so much as their indirect effects as substitutes excluding truth is lamentable. Hence their dissolution too often means nihilism rather than faith, the weakness of vacuity rather than the strength of confidence.

We do not realise what we are, we do not know our strength. We overwhelmed minority, we unpopular ones, we silenced and vanquished ones, we scorned and denied ones, we do not know that *we are the rulers of the world.* It is little wonder that we find it difficult to realise it, we who can scarcely make our voice heard in the wilderness, we who seem the most powerless of minorities. And yet it is no mere optimistic paradox or pious opinion, but a real and solid fact; we are actually and inalienably the rulers of the world. We are the rulers of the world because we impose upon it and dictate to it by an irresistible power what is much more than its present allegiance, its present thought and values; we impose on the world *the direction of its motion.* Be our voice never so feeble, be our voice silent even, and only the inaudible work of our thought proceeding within us, that thought is the determinant of the world's motion. In the direction in which our thought

moves, in that direction and in no other is the world compelled to move. What we know to be false is irretrievably condemned, what we know to be true is the truth towards which the world is moving; our values and no others are the values which it is fated to use. Our judgments are the supreme court which decides the course of the world's development, and beyond which there is no appeal.

The movement of all growth is determined by its growing-point, the movement of all evolution is determined by its most advanced development, the movement of all thought is determined by the truest, by the most honest thought, the movement of the world is determined by its thinkers. Oh! it seems so obvious that the thought of the recluse, the solitary thinker, the "philosopher," that the dusty old volumes on the top shelves are so absurdly remote, aloof from the practical actualities of the moving world! Such ineffectual thought beating its wings in vain. It is that thought of the thinker which, as a matter of fact, has always determined the movement of the world. By a grossly unavoidable and necessary law the topmost thought infiltrates all the strata that lie beneath it, down to the very lowest, down to the dim thought that is all unconscious of the very existence of the thinkers, and to which his thought is unintelligible.

Your demagogues, your labour-leaders, speak of the mighty power of rebellious labour, of the power of *numbers*, of numbers rising in their might, conscious of their strength. My numerous friends, you are, but for the power imparted to you by the solitary thinkers, as powerless as a lump of clay. It is your consciousness alone that makes you powerful, and that consciousness is the product of thinkers of living thought. No movement, no change in the world has ever taken place through the operation of any other force; no Reformation, no French Revolution, no Nineteenth Century liberations, no Democratic evolutions have ever been possible save by virtue of living thought.

We, the few, the feeble, lonely, impotent, crushed, gagged, scorned, triumphed over by all the vociferous Powers and Presses—we are the rulers of the world, the arbiters of its future destinies; inevitably, inalienably, fatally.

It is in no tone of fatuous exultation that I speak, but in very sober and serious humility, and with a somewhat overwhelming sense of the responsibility that weighs upon us. How are we ruling our kingdom? How are we shaping the future? Are we sufficiently honest, sufficiently fearless? According to our honesty and to our courage will the future of the world be. On us impersonal forces in whom Life strives to ends that are not individual, to ends of which we are but the instruments and servants, to ends which are neverthless our own, because we are Life, and the Future that will arise out of our scattered and insulted ashes is nevertheless our future, there weighs a solemn responsibility—a responsibility to ourselves.

Chinese Magic (i)

By Algernon Blackwood

I

Dr. Owen Francis felt a sudden wave of pleasure and admiration sweep over him as he saw her enter the room. He was in the act of going out, in fact, he had already said good-bye to his hostess, glad to make his escape from the chattering throng, when the tall and graceful young woman glided past him. Her carriage was superb; she had black eyes with a twinkling happiness in them; her mouth was exquisite. Round her neck, in spite of the warm afternoon, she wore a soft thing of fur or feathers; and as she brushed by to shake the hand he had just shaken himself, the tail of this touched his very cheek. Their eyes met fair and square. He felt as though her eyes also touched him.

Changing his mind, he lingered another ten minutes, chatting with various ladies he did not in the least remember, but who remembered him. He did not, of course, desire to exchange banalities with these other ladies, yet did so gallantly enough. If they found him absent-minded, they excused him since he was the famous mental specialist whom everybody was proud to know. And all the time his eyes never left the tall graceful figure that allured him almost to the point of casting a spell upon him.

His first impression deepened as he watched. He was aware of excitement, curiosity, longing; there was a touch even of exaltation in him; yet he took no steps to seek the introduction which was easily enough procurable. He checked himself, if with an effort. Several times their eyes met across the crowded room, he dared to believe—he felt instinctively—that his interest was returned. Indeed, it was more than instinct, for she was certainly aware of his presence, and he even caught her indicating him to a woman she spoke with, and evidently asking who he was. Once he half bowed, and once, in spite of him-

self, he went so far as to smile, and there came, he was sure, a faint, delicious brightening of the eyes in answer. There was, he fancied, a look of yearning in the face. The young woman charmed him inexpressibly; the very way she moved delighted him. Yet at last he slipped out of the room without a word, without an introduction, without even knowing her name. He chose his moment when her back was turned. It was characteristic of him.

For Owen Francis had ever regarded marriage, for himself at least, as a disaster that could be avoided. He was in love with his work, and his work was necessary to humanity. Others might perpetuate the race, but he must heal it. He had come to regard love as the bait wherewith Nature lays her trap to fulfil her own ends. A man in love was a man enjoying a delusion, a deluded man. In his case, and he was nearing forty-five, the theory had worked admirably, and the dangerous exception that proved it had as yet not troubled him.

"It's come at last—I do believe," he thought to himself, as he walked home, a new tumultuous emotion in his blood; "the exception, quite possibly, has come at last. I wonder . . ."

And it seemed he said it to the tall graceful figure by his side, who turned up dark eyes smilingly to meet his own, and whose lips repeated softly his last two words "I wonder . . ."

The experience, being new to him, was baffling. A part of his nature, long dormant, received the authentic thrill that pertains actually to youth. He was a man of chaste, abstemious custom. The reaction was vehement. That dormant part of him became obstreperous. He thought of his age, his appearance, his prospects; he looked thirty-eight, he was not unhandsome, his position was secure, even remarkable. That gorgeous young woman—he called her gorgeous—haunted him. Never could he forget that face, those eyes. It was extraordinary—he had left her there unspoken to, unknown, when an introduction would have been the simplest thing in the world.

"But it still is," he reflected. And the reflection filled his being with a flood of joy.

He checked himself again. Not so easily is established habit routed. He felt instinctively that, at last, he had met

his mate; if he followed it up he was a man in love, a lost man enjoying a delusion, a deluded man. But the way she had looked at him! That air of intuitive invitation which not even the sweetest modesty could conceal! He felt an immense confidence in himself; also he felt sure of her.

The presence of that following figure, already precious, came with him into his house, even into his study at the back where he sat over a number of letters by the open window. The pathetic little London garden showed its pitiful patch. The lilac had faded, but a smell of roses entered. The sun was just behind the buildings opposite, and the garden lay soft and warm in summer shadows.

He read and tossed aside the letters; one only interested him, from Edward Farque, whose journey to China had interrupted a friendship of long standing. Edward Farque's work on Eastern art and philosophy, on Chinese painting and Chinese thought in particular, had made its mark. He was an authority. He was to be back about this time, and his friend smiled with pleasure. "Dear old unpractical dreamer," as I used to call him, he mused. "He's a success, anyhow!" And as he mused, the presence that sat beside him came a little closer, yet at the same time faded. Not that he forgot her—that was impossible—but that just before opening the letter from his friend, he had come to a decision. He had definitely made up his mind to seek acquaintance. The reality replaced the remembered substitute.

"As the newspapers may have warned you," ran the familiar and kinky writing, "I am back in England after what the scribes term my ten years of exile in Cathay. I have taken a little house in Hampstead for six months, and am just settling in. Come to us to-morrow night and let me prove it to you. Come to dinner. We shall have much to say; we both are ten years wiser. You know how glad I shall be to see my old-time critic and disparager, but let me add frankly that I want to ask you a few professional, or, rather, technical, questions. So prepare yourself to come as doctor and as friend. I am writing, as the papers said truthfully, a treatise on Chinese thought. But—don't shy!—it is about Chinese Magic that I want your technical advice (the last two words were substituted for "professional wisdom," which had been crossed out) and the benefit of your vast experience. So come, old friend, come quickly, and come hungry! I'll feed your body as you shall feed my mind.

"Yours,

"EDWARD FARQUE."

"P.S.—"'The coming of a friend from a far-off land—is not this true joy?'"

Dr. Francis laid down the letter with a pleased antici-

patory chuckle, and it was the touch in the final sentence that amused him. In spite of being an authority, Farque was clearly the same fanciful, poetic dreamer as of old. He quoted Confucius as in other days. The firm but kinky writing had not altered either. The only sign of novelty he noticed was the use of scented paper, for a faint and pungent aroma clung to the big quarto sheet.

"A Chinese habit, doubtless," he decided, sniffing it with a puzzled air of disapproval. Yet it had nothing in common with the scented cachets some ladies use too lavishly, so that even the air of the street is polluted by their passing for a dozen yards. He was familiar with every kind of perfumed notepaper used in London, Paris, and Constantinople. This one was different. It was delicate and penetrating for all its faintness, pleasurable too. He rather liked it, and while annoyed that he could not name it, he sniffed at the letter several times, as though it were a flower.

"I'll go," he decided at once, and wrote an acceptance then and there. He went out and posted it. He meant to prolong his walk into the Park, taking his chief preoccupation, the face, the eyes, the figure, with him. Already he was composing the note of inquiry to Mrs. Malleson, his hostess of the tea-party, the note whose willing answer should give him the name, the address, the means of introduction he had now determined to secure. He visualised that note of inquiry, seeing it in his mind's eye; only, for some odd reason, he saw the kinky writing of Farque instead of his own more elegant script. Association of ideas and emotions readily explained this. Two new and unexpected interests had entered his life on the same day, and within half an hour of each other. What he could not so readily explain, however, was that two words in his friend's ridiculous letter, and in that kinky writing, stood out sharply from the rest. As he slipped his envelope into the mouth of the red pillar-box they shone vividly in his mind. These two words were "Chinese Magic."

II

It was the warmth of his friend's invitation as much as his own state of inward excitement that decided him

suddenly to anticipate his visit by twenty-four hours. It would clear his judgment and help his mind, if he spent the evening at Hampstead rather than alone with his own thoughts. "A dose of China," he thought, with a smile, "will do me good. Edward won't mind. I'll telephone."

He left the Park soon after six o'clock and acted upon his impulse. The connection was bad, the wire buzzed and popped and crackled; talk was difficult; he did not hear properly. The Professor had not yet come in, apparently. Francis said he would come up anyhow on the chance.

"Velly pleased," said the voice in his ear, as he rang off.

Going into his study, he drafted the note that should result in the introduction that was now, it appeared, the chief object of his life. The way this woman with the black, twinkling eyes obsessed him was—he admitted it with joy—extraordinary. The draft he put in his pocket, intending to re-write it next morning, and all the way up to Hampstead Heath, the gracious figure glided silently beside him, the eyes were ever present, his cheek still glowed where the feather boa had touched his skin. Edward Farque remained in the background. In fact, it was on the very doorstep, having rung the bell, that Francis realised he must pull himself together. "I've come to see old Farque," he reminded himself, with a smile. "I've got to be interested in him and his, and, probably, for an hour or two, to talk Chinese——" when the door opened noiselessly, and he saw facing him with a grin of celestial welcome on his yellow face, a Chinaman.

"Oh!" he said, with a start. He had not expected a Chinese servant.

"Velly pleased," the man bowed him in.

Dr. Francis stared round him with astonishment he could not conceal. A great golden idol faced him in the hall, its gleaming visage blazing out of a sort of miniature golden palanquin, with a grin, half dignified, half cruel. Fully double human size, it blocked the way, looking so life-like that it might have moved to meet him without too great a shock to what seemed possible. It rested on a throne with four massive legs, carved, the doctor saw, with serpents, dragons, and mythical monsters generally.

Round it on every side were other things in keeping. Name them he could not, describe them he did not try. He summed them up in one word—China: pictures, weapons, cloths and tapestries, bells, gongs and figures of every sort and kind imaginable.

Being ignorant of Chinese matters, Dr. Francis stood and looked about him in a mental state of some confusion. He had the feeling that he had entered a Chinese temple, for there was a faint smell of incense hanging about the house that was, to say the least, un-English. Nothing English, in fact, was visible at all. The matting on the floor, the swinging curtains of bamboo beads that replaced the customary doors, the silk draperies and pictured cushions, the bronze and ivory, the screens hung with fantastic embroideries, everything was Chinese. Hampstead vanished from his thoughts. The very lamps were in keeping, the ancient lacquered furniture as well. The value of what he saw, an expert could have told him, was considerable.

"You likee?" queried the voice at his side.

He had forgotten the servant. He turned sharply.

"Very much; it's wonderfully done," he said. "Makes you feel at home, John, eh?" he added tactfully, with a smile, and was going to ask how long all this preparation had taken, when a voice sounded on the stairs beyond. It was a voice he knew, a note of hearty welcome in its deep notes.

"The coming of a friend from a far-off land, even from Harley Street—is not this true joy?" he heard, and the next minute was shaking the hand of his old and valued friend. The intimacy between them had always been of the truest.

"I almost expected a pigtail," observed Francis, looking him affectionately up and down, "but, really—why, you've hardly changed at all!"

"Outwardly, not as much, perhaps, as Time expects," was the happy reply, "but inwardly——!" He scanned appreciatively the burly figure of the doctor in his turn. "And I can say the same of you," he declared, still holding his hand tight. "This is a real pleasure, Owen," he went on in his deep voice, "to see you again is a joy to me. Old friends meeting again—there's nothing like it in life, I

believe, nothing." He gave the hand another squeeze before he let it go. "And we," he added leading the way into a room across the hall, "neither of us are fugitives from life. We take what we can, I mean."

The doctor smiled as he noted the un-English turn of language, and together they entered a sitting-room that was, again, more like some inner chamber of a Chinese temple than a back room in a rented Hampstead house.

"I only knew ten minutes ago that you were coming, my dear fellow, the scholar was saying, as his friend gazed round him with increased astonishment, "or I would have prepared more suitably for your reception. I was out till late. All this"—he waved his hand—"surprises you, of course, but the fact is I have been home ten days already, and most of what you see was arranged for me in advance of my arrival. Hence its apparent completion. I say, 'apparent,' because, actually, it is far from faithfully carried out. Yet to exceed," he added, "is as bad as to fall short."

The doctor watched him while he listened to a somewhat lengthy explanation of the various articles surrounding them. The speaker—he confirmed his first impression—had changed little during the long interval; the same enthusiasm was in him as before, the same fire and dreaminess alternately in the fine grey eyes, the same humour and passion about the mouth, the same free gestures, and the same big voice. Only the lines had deepened on the forehead, and on the fine face the air of thoughtfulness was also deeper. It was Edward Farque as of old, scholar, poet, dreamer and enthusiast, despiser of Western civilisation, contemptuous of money, generous and upright, a type of value, an individual.

"You've done well, done splendidly, Edward, old man," said his friend presently, after hearing of Chinese wonders that took him somewhat beyond his depth perhaps. "No one is more pleased than I. I've watched your books. You haven't regretted England, I'll be bound?" he asked.

"The philosopher has no country, in any case," was the reply, steadily given. "But out there, I confess I've found my home." He leaned forward, a deeper earnestness in his tone and expression. And into his face, as he

spoke, came a glow of happiness. "My heart," he said, softly, "is in China."

"I see it is, I see it is," put in the other, conscious that he could not honestly share his friend's enthusiasm. "And you're fortunate to be free to live where your treasure is," he added, after a moment's pause. "You must be a happy man. Your passion amounts to nostalgia, I suspect. Already yearning to get back there, probably?"

Farque gazed at him for some seconds with shining eyes. "You remember the Persian saying, I'm sure," he said. "'You see a man drink, but you do not see his thirst.' Well," he added, laughing happily, "you may see me off in six months' time, but you will not see my happiness."

While he went on talking, the doctor glanced round the room, marvelling still at the exquisite taste of everything, the neat arrangement, the perfect matching of form and colour. A woman might have done this thing, occurred to him, as the haunting figure shifted deliciously into the foreground of his mind again. The thought of her had been momentarily replaced by all he heard and saw. She now returned, filling him with joy, anticipation and enthusiasm. Presently, when it was his turn to talk, he would tell his friend about this new, unimagined happiness that had burst upon him like a sunrise. Presently, but not just yet. He remembered, too, with a passing twinge of possible boredom to come, that there must be some delay before his own heart could unburden itself in its turn. Farque wanted to ask some professional questions, of course. He had for the moment forgotten that part of his letter in his general interest and astonishment.

"Happiness, yes . . ." he murmured, aware that his thoughts had wandered, and catching at the last word he remembered hearing. "As you said just now in your own queer way—you haven't changed a bit, let me tell you, in your picturesqueness of quotation, Edward!—one must not be fugitive from life; one must seize happiness when and where it offers."

He said it lightly enough, hugging internally his own sweet secret; but he was a little surprised at the earnestness of his friend's rejoinder: "Both of us, I see," came the deep voice, backed by the flash of the far-seeing grey eyes,

"have made some progress in the doctrine of life and death." He paused, gazing at the other with sight that was obviously turned inwards upon his own thoughts. "Beauty," he went on presently, his tone even more serious, "has been my lure; yours, Reality . . ."

"You don't flatter either of us, Edward. That's too exclusive a statement," put in the doctor. He was becoming every minute more and more interested in the workings of his friend's mind. Something about the signs offered eluded his understanding. "Explain yourself, old scholar-poet. I'm a dull, practical mind, remember, and can't keep pace with Chinese subtleties."

"*You*'ve left out Beauty," was the quiet rejoinder, "while *I* left out Reality. That's neither Chinese nor subtle. It's simply true."

"A bit wholesale, isn't it?" laughed Francis. "A big generalisation, rather."

A bright light seemed to illuminate the scholar's face. It was as though an inner lamp was suddenly lit. At the same moment the sound of a soft gong floated in from the hall outside, so soft that the actual strokes were not distinguishable in the wave of musical vibration that reached the ear.

Farque rose to lead the way into dinner.

"What if I——" he whispered, "have combined the two?" And upon his face was a look of joy that reached down into the other's own full heart with its unexpectedness and wonder. It was the last remark in the world he had looked for. He wondered for a moment whether he interpreted it correctly.

"By Jove . . . !" he exclaimed. "Edward, what d'you mean?"

"You shall hear—after dinner," said Farque, his voice mysterious, his eyes still shining with his inner joy. "I told you I have some questions to ask you—professionally." And they took their seats round an ancient, marvellous table, lit by two swinging lamps of soft green jade, while the Chinese servant waited on them with the silent movements and deft neatness of his imperturbable celestial race.

(*To be concluded.*)

Letters: Posted and Unposted (iii)

By Constance Malleson

UNPOSTED

13

EDWARDES SQUARE,
November 7th, 1918.

DEAR HEART,

Such a day! The streets are wet, filthy, streaming with mud and slush, and the pavement is nothing but a patterned mess of dirty footprints and puddles. The hot smell of oil and petrol from passing cars penetrates almost gratefully through the coldness, for the rain is pouring down and is sweeping in great gusts across the road. But I'm so . . . . light-hearted! All morning I've been walking about in my "bonnet rouge," without an umbrella. I've let the rain splash my cheeks, and trickle down my nose, and beat all about my body. And do you know why? Because my thoughts were flying on April winds, and I was hearing the whole of the liquid bird-song that flows into the world, as dawn fades before the greater glory of day. And I wasn't walking in the muddy London streets at all. I was striding with you through splendid country spaces, out beneath the living sky. Your eager face was level with mine as we trod the road, in time with one another, and with eternity.

* * * * * * *

Always I am dreaming of long days with you, days spent deep in the country. To walk and walk and walk, and then, when the sun is setting, to find one's self at an inn. Do you know "The Blue Ball" at Countisbury? And do you know that I love to walk all day without eating?

"You look to the sun," Kinglake says, "for he is your taskmaster, and by him you know the measure of the work that you have done, and the measure of the work that remains for you to do." Then, when the sun has spent his

glory, when the world is grown quiet beneath a faded sky, when for the last two miles the road has lain wrapped in darkness, then, it is good to step into the kindly firelit parlour of "The Blue Ball." There, in that small, low-roofed room, we two would draw close to the fire, and we would watch the golden sparks as they fly upward and are lost in the chimney's black immensity. On the tiny window-sill of the parlour, quantities of queer green plants live in dwarfish pots; and in front of the window there's a long table, and sitting at it, reading (waiting really, just for you and for me), there's a dear Devonshire woman whose cheeks are brighter than ripe apples. First, she'd smile at us, and then, laying her spectacles down on her open book, she'd bustle off to get the tea. When she'd gone, I know I should jump up to see what book she was reading. And do you know . . . . it would be *Wuthering Heights*.

I should feel oddly moved finding that book there, and I wouldn't come back at once to the fireside: I'd want to be alone. I would go and stand in the doorway where the fierce breath from the moors could sweep through my hair, and the voice of Exmoor, the voice of the lonely places, would be calling, calling to me across Countisbury Hill. I would stand there, quite still, while the storm came rattling over. And going indoors, I wouldn't be able to talk, just at first. The small lamplit parlour and the shadows chasing across the stone floor, would seem . . . . quaint . . . . unreal. But the thought that came to me out there in the storm, would have to be spoken: "*If I had a son, I would call him Heathcliff.*"

Perhaps for one short moment, I would see your eyes burning from across the darkness—— And then tea! A big, knobbly loaf, and boiled eggs, two each, and a beautiful big pat of butter with one of those delightfully superior-looking swans stamped on it! Should I get to know you a little, while I watered the pot? And I wonder, do you smoke a pipe in the country? No; I believe you'd still smoke my cigarettes, while that naughty-child smile of yours lurked about your mouth. Do you know . . . Of course you don't; . . . but *I* do; I know the absolutely first time I ever saw you. It was at a labour meeting last spring, when you were home on leave. "What a queer, rough

person," I thought. In that very moment, I saw you with the Peak country as a background—the rugged, black, Peak country.

They say first impressions are always, eventually, right.

* * * * * * *

Dear one, I love you . . . . and I have it in me to give you a deep, deep love; a strong and unchanging love. Sometimes I think that in your face I have seen all the beauty and the poetry of the world; all the harshness, too, and the striving, and the desperate hunger. But I think that you have never quite touched bottom; you have never known the pain, the pain that is beyond all bearing, nor the madness, nor the despair, nor the very agony that is at the root of things.

14

EDWARDES SQUARE,
November 11th, 1918.
9 *a.m.*

They signed the armistice at 5 a.m. this morning. An unspeakable thankfulness floods my heart and sweeps everything before it, leaving no room for any other feeling.

Nothing personal matters any more, nothing——

15

EDWARDES SQUARE,
December 4th, 1918.

The day before yesterday I saw you for a moment. You looked terrible; so worn and haggard. Your face haunted me all day. I spent most of the afternoon ringing up stage doors and box offices to try to get through to you, but without success. I knew you were rehearsing somewhere, but I didn't know where. I was having supper out, but I left early, and went straight to your house. I had to. But when I got to your door, there wasn't even an answer to my knock. It was all dark and empty. I peered in at the windows, but everything was deserted. In your study a few red embers glowed darkly among the dust and ruins of a half-dead fire. I turned and walked away with a feeling of utter desolation in my heart.

But yesterday, you came to me. You told me you had tried to find me the night before. You, too, had come and looked for a light in my window, but you, too, had found

everything in darkness. As you talked, you went and sat down in your usual chair. You looked very unhappy. Your words came jerkily:

"Things are rather difficult . . . just now . . . I'll have to tell somebody . . . soon. I've been in love with . . . someone . . . for a long time. I—I don't think she loves me . . . and I must be loved. She mothers me . . . I want to tell her about you. I want this to be bigger . . . I want it . . . to grow. She knows . . . that I'm hungry . . ."

We went out together. We went on the top of a 'bus. We talked shop, plans, your career. I stayed with you until it was time to go down to the theatre. After the show, we met again and worked.

Sitting in your room, working with you, I began to think that never before had I known happiness.

16

EDWARDES SQUARE,
December 7th, 1918.

Yesterday was the last night at the theatre; and so to-night, my first free evening, I asked you to dine with me, and you said you would.

We dined at Bellini's. The first time I ever went there was a glorious summer day about two years ago. It was the sort of day that makes me madly extravagant. I remember buying a new hat on that particular occasion and taking a taxi home to get my cheque-book (having no money on me), and the saleswoman apparently thinking I wasn't the sort to be trusted! That hat (a winged thing just blown together), was christened "Bellini."

I don't know why, but from the very first the place reminded me of Paris. And I love Paris. You were already waiting for me in the little hall when I arrived—though I wasn't late . . . How we did talk during dinner! You said at the time that you hadn't talked so much for years. You told me about your time in the Army—1914 until nearly the end.

When we got up to go, the restaurant was quite empty. We walked across Bond Street—a pathetic street by night—and through somehow into Berkeley Square. We didn't speak for quite a long time. We were so much more alone,

out in the open night; just you and I together, walking very fast, we didn't quite know where. At last you spoke:

"It's Anne Howard I'm in love with . . . I've told her about you—she still likes you."

I pressed your arm closer: "I'm glad of that."

We were half-way up Mount Street when you spoke again. Your voice was choked. There was an awful simplicity in your words: "Anne's in love with someone else."

"Are you sure?"

"She told me."

Underground in the dark cavern of instinct, joy rose, a small, devilish thing, wormlike, pestiferous. It wriggled and leapt and crawled, contaminating the very depths of my soul. Then from above a greater joy seized me: You had told me. You trusted me. In that moment I became equal to your trust. Your pain was my pain. The shining claws of your pain were fastened in my heart . . .

We had crossed Park Lane. Deep among the stretching shadows of the Park we found two seats under an old gnarled tree. I threw my hat on the ground, and you drew my head down upon your shoulder. Oh, it was good to be near you, and good to feel the cold night air against my forehead. The stars sparkled like a million diamond arrows piercing the velvet cloth of heaven. Infinitely far and remote, the still dead planet shed upon the earth a frozen and ghostly radiance. In aching bewilderment I gazed up at the sky. I wanted to take my heart and lay it upon the altar of the night.

"What does Dennis think about all this?"

I moistened my lips.

"When we were married . . . I was awfully in love with him. We were wonderfully happy. Then . . . he fell in love with someone else. That broke things up for a bit, but now . . . we're very real friends. There's hardly anything in the whole world we don't agree about."

The shadows deepened. They hemmed us in. They lay like gaping trenches seared across the earth. My heart seemed dead; my lips dumb. I sought your eyes. You drew me close against you, and it seemed to me then, that the whirling universe had come suddenly to a standstill, had lurched, and had remained deathly still. The moment

grew, lengthened, and reached into eternity—then, I felt the passion of your groping hand. Our hearts merged into the heart of all life, and were complete in fierce destruction. I leant back, sobbing a little, my head upon your shoulder, my cheek against your cheek.

Out of the terrified earth, along the ground rising, a whisper came, slipping half strangled through your lips:

"It's Anne I'm hungry for . . . I had to tell you . . ."

We went together to the stage door of Anne's theatre. The show had been over some time.

* * * * * * *

Alone, I walked until morning.

(*To be continued.*)

The Socialist

By S. H. McGrady

EVERY afternoon the old Socialist went for a walk through the fields. He walked slowly, leaning on a stick, for all his life he had fought a hard fight. For years he had toiled, and now, when all things were fading, he had no regrets.

This afternoon, when Spring, clothed all in white, was dancing in the meadows, he had gone further than was his custom. Never again, perhaps, would he gaze on the mist in the elm trees, or hear the call of the cuckoo.

So, with feeble steps he crossed the tiny bridge over the brook, and entered the wood. He felt rather tired. It was a long time since he had come so far. At last, however, he reached the little waterfall that splashed with silver spray among the leaves, and, sitting down, he feasted his eyes on the vernal beauty of the scene. Here a gorse bush flamed, and there, fresh and graceful, stood a wild cherry tree in blossom. Under the branches were shy anemones and tufts of yellow primroses, and in the undergrowth a bullfinch was calling to his mate.

For a long time he sat there, with his back against an aged ash, and his feet at the water's edge. The sunlight, peeping through the leaves, touched gently the grey hair and patient, rugged face. He watched the tiny, brown mice, squeaking and playing in and out of the bushes. He remained immovable, holding his breath, while two wild, glowing hares, with quivering nostrils, gambolled around him. Then—save for the music of running water—all was still, and the woods were full of beauty and a great silence.

A moment later a thrush poured out his melody.

For a long time the old Socialist sat there. Very glad was he for this vision of spring. He thought of the springtimes of long ago, when he and his merry companions wandered over the countryside, looking for eggs or playing robbers. He thought of the best springtime of all, when a trusting girl put her hand in his. And he thought of the factories in which he had worked, with the grime and grease

and roaring machinery, and the monotonous, never-ending toil, while out in the fields the fresh, gentle wind was blowing, and the buds were bursting into blossom.

But, most of all, he thought of the fight he had fought for freedom. How, after the day's work was over, tired and weary, perhaps, he had given the few hours remaining to Humanity. For the cause he loved he had sacrificed leisure and pleasure, domestic happiness even. He had never received a decent education, and it was with difficulty that he had taught himself to read and write. Literature, music, art were not for him. Nearly always he had lived among the smoke and dirt, slaving in the works, day after day, year after year, with intervals for food and sleep, so that on the morrow the human machine might be ready again for the dreary, weary monotony of soulless toil. To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow . . . .

It was not for himself that he had fought. It was not for himself he had struggled against the hideous machine that ground human lives to powder. It was not for himself that he had striven to express in words the wild strivings and longings that gathered in his heart. He had never had a chance. But the boys and girls, shouting and playing in the streets, and the peaceful, sleeping babies—life must be better for them.

Socialist! How often had the very men and women whose battles he fought turned against him, laughed him to scorn. Yet he loved them, his comrades, not less, but rather all the more. For they, too, had never had a chance.

Socialist! Groping in the dark! Yet, even now, there were signs of the dawn. The thousands of ordinary, obscure men, like himself, had not lived in vain.

So the old man sat there in the stillness of the wood, watching the water splashing over the stones, looking up at the patches of blue above the pine trees, dreaming, wondering.

All at once, however, he realised with a start that he was not alone.

A short distance away, watching him intently, a stranger was standing. His face was gaunt and pale, his lips firm, his eyes piercing. At first glance the expression seemed stern and relentless, cruel even. Yet there was something about him that spoke of kindness and sympathy, as if he

had seen much pain and suffering, and knew that these, too, are the gifts of God.

"It is very pleasant here," said the old Socialist.

"You are right," answered the stranger, sitting down on the grassy bank beside him.

Although the weather was warm he wore a heavy cloak, seemingly without inconvenience, for there were no traces of perspiration on the pale, calm face.

"I can easily see that you do not belong to these parts," observed the Socialist.

"I travel a good deal," answered the other.

His voice was gentle, and for all his severity there was something charming about his smile.

"All my life I have longed to travel, but being a poor man, I have never had an opportunity of doing so. How wonderful it must be to visit new lands, to see strange peoples, to study their customs and ways, to realise that all these men are brothers, that they, too, are crying in the night."

The stranger agreed. He condemned the caste system. Divisions of class were nothing to him. Yet everywhere society erected barriers. For himself he saw no difference between a peasant and a prince.

"I am an old man," continued the Socialist. "To-day, because it is spring-time, I ventured a little further than usual, and I have been sitting here by the water, listening to the birds, and living over again the years that are gone. And I have been thinking, too, of the future, and wondering if it will be well with the cause I have at heart. I want all men to have an equal chance. I want to do away with class privileges. I want the world for democracy. But sometimes, as to-day, I am afraid. Perhaps, after all, tyranny and capitalism will prevail. Perhaps there will always be serfs and masters to grind them down. Yet, whatever the future, I have no regrets; for I have fought and suffered for the truth."

"Do not despair," said the stranger. "Only this morning I arrived here from a far-off land, where all men, without exception, have the same rights."

The eyes of the old Socialist lit up with enthusiasm.

"Tell me," he exclaimed eagerly, "tell me about this happy, far-off land."

"In that land," answered the stranger with a kind smile, "all men and women are equal. There you will find no class distinctions, no monopoly of land or gold, no corrupt politicians, no savage wars. For there all men are brothers."

"Splendid! Splendid!" cried the old man, clasping his hands.

"In that land all share alike. A king and a beggar, going there, are equal; and a nobleman and a dustman receive the same treatment. There are no poor and no rich—for everything is in common—no hunger and poverty, no strife and cruelty and hatred. For all is rest and peace."

Music rang in the ears of the old Socialist, and glad was his heart. Wonderful, far-off land! How lucky was this fascinating stranger to have lived there.

"Would you not like to see this country?" asked the speaker, leaning towards him, "you who have struggled and suffered that men may become brothers."

"Indeed, I would," cried the old man, his eyes sparkling. "But I am old and feeble and poor—as you see."

"Yet there mighty statesmen, and silver-tongued poets, even the rich, would welcome you as a comrade, and you and they would be one."

Fascinated, the old Socialist gazed at the pale face of the stranger, and met his deep, piercing eyes. His limbs were trembling, his heart beating violently, for upon him there came a vague, indescribable feeling, a strange mixture of contentment and fear. Surely, he had fought a good fight, and now he was old and longed for rest. And this stranger would help him, and show him the way.

"Take me—if you will—to this wonderful far-off land."

Smiling, the stranger stretched out his hand, and laid his cold, thin fingers upon the fingers of the old Socialist.

"Come! We will go together. I will be your guide."

And as the old man looked, the hard lines on the stranger's face melted away, and he seemed no longer stern and cruel, but full of kindness and hope. And his eyes were those of a little child.

"Tell me," he whispered. "What is your name?"

"I am Death," answered the stranger gently, taking the old man's hand.

The Poet's Allegory

By Stephen Southwold

Part I.

(With acknowledgments to the Fabulist.)

All through the long warm days of summer the grasshopper played among the grasses of the field. He sang to the working bees, cheering their laden flight. Near by an ant worked unceasingly. She held no converse with the bees, nor listened to the song of the grasshopper. Always she worked, storing food.

Now summer drew on to autumn, and autumn slipped into winter. There was no grass in the fields, and the trees were bare. The grasshopper shivered in the cold wind, and vainly sought food. At last, hungry and desolate, he presented himself at the ant's house, and begged for food and shelter.

"What did you do in the summer days?" said the ant. "Did you store no food?" "None," said the grasshopper; "but I sang to the bees." "Sang?" said the ant. "Go now, then, and dance; that will keep you warm." And, laughing, she drove the grasshopper from her door.

Part II.

(With apologies to God.)

All through the summer-time of life a poet sang. Those who were laden stopped a moment to listen to his music. Near by Big Business toiled unceasingly—deaf, blind and silent. Always he worked, storing up money.

Now the days of the poet drew on to middle-age, and soon middle-age slipped into impotence and penury. He sang no more. At last, in despair, he presented himself at the house of Big Business, and begged for food and shelter.

"What did you do in your summer-time?" said Big Business; "did you store nothing?" "Nothing indeed," answered the poet; "but I sang to the people. I made music for the world." "Made music!" laughed Big Business; "but did you make cent. per cent.? Go to the devil."

So the poet went to the devil, who received him warmly.

The Recognition of Mr. H. A. Barker

By W. L. Williams

The petition to the Archbishop of Canterbury, signed by 307 past and present members of Parliament, was the culmination of all the efforts made in recent years to secure for one of the most devoted servants of humanity a measure of the justice which was not only his due, but was long overdue.

Mr. Barker's claim has for many years been a single one, viz., that the methods of manipulation which he originated, practised, and developed should be recognised, that they should be incorporated in the curriculum of each medical school, so that the knowledge of them, diffused generally among the rank and file of the healing profession, might be available for sufferers through all future time. He made no personal claims. He sought no personal honour. Naturally he refused to endure "opposition, contumely, and persecution" in silence, to take "lying down" the "slings and arrows" of men who were for years too prejudiced even to acquaint themselves with the nature of the methods they denounced, or with the work of the man they endeavoured to hound down.

The controversy between this one man and a profession vast, wealthy, entrenched behind legal defences, and strengthened by the possession of all the recognised avenues of knowledge, is one of the most extraordinary in the history of science. It was Barker *versus* the medical world. But the issue is no longer in doubt. It is true, avowed recognition is withheld by the Medical Council. But it can no longer, on its platform, or in its Press, deny that Mr. Barker has knowledge of methods unknown to surgical orthodoxy, deny that he uses those methods with singular and almost unvarying success in cases which the most eminent practitioners have failed either to relieve or cure. *The whole world knows that to-day.*

The significance of the petition does not lie in the request that the Primate would grant a Lambeth medical degree, *honoris causâ*, to Mr. Barker. It lies rather in the fact that the petition voices powerfully world opinion—that it demands justice for a distinguished public benefactor—that it asks for some recognition of knowledge and skill laboriously acquired, but generously, even prodigally, placed at the service of sufferers; for some reward of labours which for years were attended with incredible personal abuse.

Let me be quite frank. Had the Archbishop granted the petition of the 307 Parliamentarians, Mr. Barker would not have benefited one iota as a professional man, nor would his standing have been advantaged a single degree. The Archbishop refused to grant the request because he thought there was "danger of misleading the public as to the exact character of the qualifications possessed by a remarkable man." The Primate's fears were unfounded. No one would have resorted to Mr. Barker for treatment other than the treatment he has afforded for twenty-eight years. The Lambeth Medical Degree would, without doubt, have been welcomed by Mr. Barker as recognition of his character and work from an eminent quarter, for he has stated in the Press that "he was disappointed, for he had hoped that the possession of the Lambeth Medical Degree might have invested him with the necessary official status to demonstrate his methods in the surgical schools of this country." By this time Mr. Barker is utterly disillusioned on this point also.

No, the real value of the petition to Mr. Barker is in the fact that men of the highest standing, representative of every section of intellectual life, have declared in a formal document that they are convinced by evidence that Mr. Barker is, as the *Times* said in a leading article (November 25th, 1912), "a benefactor of the public who ought to be honoured accordingly" and "a master of manipulative surgery who relieves suffering *for which no relief can be found elsewhere*." That conviction is the basis of the petition to the Archbishop.

The fact that Mr. Barker patriotically offered his services to the Medical Board of the War Office —only to be rebuffed—and was actually the means of

sending back to the fighting line many men who but for his aid would have been lost to the country at a time when every man counted, only strengthened the appeal they made on his behalf. The petition is the expression of the judgment, universal outside the medical profession, and largely within that charmed circle, that the time has fully come for some reward to be bestowed on an eminent, a patriotic, and an unselfish public benefactor. Comparisons are odious. But how could public honours be bestowed more fittingly upon anyone than upon Herbert Atkinson Barker, who, to quote from the petition, "is probably doing more to relieve suffering humanity than any living surgeon." The Primate's reply has a peculiar value, despite the rejection of the appeal made to him on Mr. Barker's behalf. It underlines every statement made by the 307 members of Parliament in the petition. It does so after inquiry, investigation, and long reflection. It concedes every claim of professional and personal worth. "No one," says the Primate, "can read the published account—the general veracity of which is unchallenged—of what Mr. Barker has been enabled to do, or give attention to the individual testimony abundantly furnished to me by letter and by word of mouth, without reaching the conviction that he possesses some manipulative gift of a most unusual kind, and has knowledge and skill necessary for applying that gift to the benefit of patients who place themselves under his treatment." This is recognition indeed—so full and unreserved that it compensates Mr. Barker, I imagine, for much of that "oppositon, contumely, and persecution" to which the petition refers in its closing words.

Further, that emphatic verdict is prefaced by an expression of a hope on the part of the Primate that, in default of the Lambeth degree, "some means may be found of marking the country's appreciation of what I cannot but call Mr. Barker's eminent services to sufferers." The Archbishop dwells very near the fountain of public honour. It does not need much imagination to read between these lines the Primate's private opinion that Mr. Barker should be the recipient of some substantial mark of the country's appreciation. I venture to think that no one will disagree with me when I say that such public

honour would arouse as unanimous pleasure and approval as the Primate's refusal occasioned widespread regret and disappointment.

One regret, and one regret only, lessens the joy Mr. Barker's most understanding and, therefore, most sympathetic supporters have experienced from this action on the part of so many members of the House of Commons. They rejoice exceedingly in the substantial recognition of the genius, tenacity of purpose, profound and unremitting devotion to his life-work, which is Mr. Barker's to-day. Their regret arises from the fact that recognition does not bring nearer the fulfilment of the chief desire of his heart. To establish in the eyes of men the validity and the value of his methods of manipulative surgery, naturally enough, was his first and greatest desire. Closely allied was his further ambition to see his right to enter the medical schools conceded, and the opportunity afforded him of imparting his unique technique to the oncoming generations of surgical practitioners. The missionary instinct in Mr. Barker is equally strong as the instinct to explore. He desires to impart the knowledge of his methods, but feels he can only do so under conditions which do not reflect upon his character as a professional man. Let it not be forgotten. Mr. Barker's methods, *as proved by the evidence of surgeons*, are his own, and the knowledge of them is not shared by any orthodox surgeon in the world. Unless they are imparted by Mr. Barker the knowledge of them and the skill in the use of them will vanish with his passing. It is no longer possible for orthodox surgeons to profess that they are masters of manipulative methods, or to claim that they can perform every operation Mr. Barker performs. This fallacy has been exposed again and again. The number of medical men who have passed through Mr. Barker's hands demonstrates beyond controversy that he has a knowledge and a skill which are unique. Let me quote one instance.

Lately, to my certain knowledge, two medical men—one until recently a lecturer on physiology at the largest hospital in London—another a present house surgeon at one of the most important hospitals in the metropolis—had to seek operations at Mr. Barker's hands for relief they could not obtain from their most distinguished colleagues.

Medical men are notoriously loyal to their professional brethren, and it is unthinkable that such men would seek aid at the hands of an unorthodox practitioner, if they could secure it from a qualified surgeon. Those members of the Faculty who claim a knowledge and a skill equal to Mr. Barker's are on the horns of a dilemma from which I see no escape. Either their professional brethren are ignorant of the fact that they possess this knowledge and skill, or they are lacking in the faith which would impel them to resort to those eminent orthodox practitioners of manipulative methods.

No, experience has demonstrated that Mr. Barker's methods are original and unique. Only a short time ago a medical paper admitted that Mr. Barker "stands alone as an exponent of methods of manipulative practice, of the benefits of which medical men have frequently availed themselves," and added that "common knowledge has established that his art consists of procedures unknown to surgeons."

Is the world to lose them? There is a real peril of suffering humanity being called on to see this knowledge and skill lost, because the Faculty will not admit their profound mistake and fling open the doors of the schools to this singularly gifted investigator.

The suggestion has been made that either Oxford or Cambridge should confer a degree upon Mr. Barker. The Press supports the suggestion. The *Daily News* in a leader said, "We hope such an application will be promptly and sympathetically received," and added, "To possess his name on its academic roll would confer a distinction on any university."

But even in the event of a favourable response, the danger will not have been avoided. How are these methods to be preserved for sufferers? That is the question of questions for all supporters of Mr. Barker at the present moment. His life has not been an easy one. He has not spared himself. His friends saw with profound concern the effect of the strain upon a not too robust constitution by his patriotic exertions to aid victims of the war. Not once or twice has he broken down. His capacity for prolonged exertion does not increase, and he finds himself able to treat effectively only a limited number

of the crowds who clamour for his services. If humanity loses the advantage his methods secure for sufferers, the loss would be, to quote a medical paper, "not only an undying disgrace to the profession," but a national calamity of the most regrettable kind. Cannot an appeal be made to the leading surgeons of the country to invite him to demonstrate his methods in their hospitals? In those institutions he should find a sphere where he could explain and demonstrate his methods. This is his true ambition. This is what would most satisfy his mind and heart. The appeal to the Primate, supported by so many eminent men —legal luminaries like the Lord Chancellor and Attorney-General—by men distinguished in the political world—was naturally a source of great gratification. It was an unparalleled act on the part of members of Parliament, and it placed Mr. Barker's reputation on an unassailable basis. It was an act of national recognition, probably unprecedented in the annals of the House. But the great object now is to secure the knowledge of Mr. Barker's methods for all time. Ultimately *they* will be his most enduring monument and constitute his greatest claim to a permanent niche in the temple of Science and of Fame.

Decadence in Singing

By Albert Garcia

WHAT is the cause of the present-day decadence in singing? Two reasons are generally given—one, the lack of good voices, the other—the lack of competent teachers; neither of which do I consider correct. The voices of to-day are every bit as good as they were 50 or 100 years ago, and as to the teachers there are still some excellent ones. No, the chief fault lies with the pupils; who will not devote the time necessary to enable them to become first-class singers; they want to arrive at the goal of a finished artist, as quickly as they would get into an aeroplane and fly to York or Paris.

The system of years and years of study, which our ancestors devoted to the perfecting of their art, is a thing of the past. To-day a few courses of lessons, and, *hey presto*, the thing is done—at least, in the minds of the ignorant it is—but how rude their awakening! After a short public career their voices—owing to insufficient study—fail them, and they take to teaching, with only too direful results. They get hold of some unsuspecting subjects, and try to impart what little they have learnt, intermixed with choice inventions of their own, possibly culled from some of the many books on singing, and turned and twisted to suit their own convenience.

Their pupils, in their turn, teach other innocents, and so the thing goes on *ad infinitum*, gradually getting worse all the time. Thus you hear of wonderful people who in less than no time will increase your range from a few notes to three, or more, octaves; who will make a bass sing tenor, and a contralto soprano. Also there are teachers who, by means of their marvellous exercises, undertake to cure certain throat troubles, which our great throat doctors themselves find difficulty in remedying.

About the only method which does not seem to have

been taught is that of making the pupil sing standing on his head, after the manner of Mrs. Crummles' performance in *Nicholas Nickleby*; but perhaps this may yet come.

No wonder one constantly hears the cry, "The teaching of to-day is so bad." This, as I have mentioned before, is not true in its entirety, and if pupils would only take the trouble to find out a reliable teacher, and give sufficient time, at least three to four years, for study, they would certainly have a better chance of developing into first-class artists; provided, of course, they had the necessary qualifications, *i.e.*, a fine voice, vigorous health, artistic temperament, intelligence, good sense of rhythm, the patience for long and persevering study, and the power of application to study.

The great secret of the "Old Italian School," so often spoken of, seems to have depended, as much as anything, on the indefatigable patience and perseverance displayed by both master and pupil; and it is the appreciation of the necessity of persevering study which is lacking in our students of to-day.

I once asked my great-aunt, Madame Viardot, the secret of the old Italian masters, and her reply, very slowly uttered, was, "Albert, the *great* secret of the old Italian school of singing was—PATIENCE."

Sims Reeves, in his book, says: "My apprenticeship to singing lasted eighteen years"—and Sir Charles Santley would certainly not have become the "king of baritones" had he not devoted many years to study.

One point I should like to emphasise, and that is the impossibility of learning singing from books. It is no more possible to do this than it is to learn the piano or violin without personal supervision, although, I believe, there are some extraordinarily clever people who offer to teach these arts by correspondence.

I do not mean by this that some of the excellent books written on the subject are of no use; on the contrary, they are decidedly helpful when a pupil has got over the apprenticeship stage, and begun to understand his art; but they are difficult for the "tyro" to grasp, and might cause him to try experiments to his undoing.

I should like, however, to cite one book which I would

advise all serious students of the art of singing to "read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest"—I refer to Mr. Plunket Greene's *Interpretation in Song*. It is not an *open sesame* to voice production, but for the student who knows how to use his voice it is of incalculable value.

This brings us to another point, and that is the introduction of the "rubbishy" ballad, rubbishy both from a musical and poetical point of view, which has only helped to push the art of singing still further in the mire.

Get the public to want only the best in song, and automatically the standard of singers will rise, as they will be obliged to prepare more seriously to appear before a more enlightened audience.

One might argue that there is plenty of good vocal music, but few singers capable of executing it—and why? Because we have been dosed with the rubbishy ballad (only too greedily pounced upon by the half-baked singers), which calls for little study, and when the vocalist attempts an aria by Handel or Mozart the result is a dismal failure. Start with Handel and Mozart and you are getting a foundation for the voice which is lasting and not ephemeral.

Would Patti, Melba, Sims Reeves, Santley, Ben Davies have risen to such heights if they had only studied ballads of the "rubbishy" order?

Apart from the older classical writers we have plenty of fine songs by modern British composers, to name only a few, in alphabetical order—Ernest Austin, Granville Bantock, Hubert Bath, Frank Bridge, Coleridge-Taylor, Eric Coates, Frederic Cowen, Harold Darke, Walford Davies, Edward Elgar, Herbert Hughes, Hamilton Harty, John Ireland, C. E. Lidgey, Easthope Martin, Hubert Parry, Graham Peel, Roger Quilter, Landon Ronald, Cyril Scott, Reginald Somervell, Charles Stanford, Vaughan Williams—why, then, descend to the trash too often heard in our concert-halls to-day?

It seems, therefore, that a combination of two things is helping to keep the standard of singing down—*i.e.*, the want of sufficient study on the part of the student, and the rubbishy ballad helping the singer in his laziness. The remedy is self-evident. It is for the singer to carry it out.

We have in Sir Henry Wood and Mr. Landon Ronald two great musicians who have devoted their lives to raising

the standard of orchestral music in this country, and undoubtedly they have done so. Why cannot the same thing be done in the world of song?

There is already in existence the "Teachers' Registration Act," which should do something to help matters, as I believe no teacher will in future be registered without having previously studied for a period of three years in some recognised school of music. It is evident that, unless a student has had the patience thoroughly to master his art, he cannot be in a position to teach others.

It is not absolutely necessary for a teacher to have been a public singer, as very often the best performers make but poor teachers; but he should, at any rate, have studied with that idea in view, so as to be able to illustrate to his pupils the right and the wrong method of production.

Singing being, to a certain extent, learnt by imitation, it follows that the teacher who is able to sing a song, or passage of a song, to his pupil, is better equipped than the one who cannot do so.

Many seem to think that it is only necessary to play the piano well to warrant their teaching singing, and I fear this sort of thing is practised only too freely all over the country. I recall when I was studying with Madame Viardot in Paris, one day an American lady was announced, and after a little preliminary talk my great-aunt asked what she might have the pleasure of doing for her; the reply was, "I guess I want two lessons." Madame Viardot, in her usual calm manner, said, "And pray why *two* lessons?" "I guess because it's a plural," said the American lady. "You shall have *two* lessons," replied Madame Viardot with a smile. Here, at all events, was candour. This lady was going back to America to say she had had lessons from Madame Viardot.

Again, there are others who study the art of singing purely from an anatomical and physiological point of view. They will talk to you most glibly about the crico-thyroid muscle, thyro-hyoid ligament, arytenoid cartilage, etc.; but ask them to sing a simple scale, and they are done.

The question is often asked, At what age should lessons in singing commence? Many people think sixteen years of age in the case of girls, and eighteen in the case of boys. Personally, I consider it not only unnecessary, but a waste

of valuable time to wait so long. Children can begin to study when quite young, provided they are taught *very* simple exercises, solfeggi, and songs in the *middle* part of the voice, and for a few minutes only each day.

Many of the greatest singers were trained quite early in life. Madame Viardot commenced to sing when three years of age, and always advised the early training of children.

It is not only good from a health point of view, but helps to prepare them musically for the time when more serious study is undertaken. Especially in the case of boys should singing be discontinued during the period when the voice undergoes a change.

Careful training from the commencement is of the utmost importance, as it is extremely difficult, in some cases impossible, to cure faults acquired during the early stages.

The above remarks apply more expressly to children under the care of schoolmasters and mistresses at the head of the various private and secondary schools throughout the country.

Instead, therefore, of deploring the state of singing, and yearning for the "Old Italian School," it is the duty of everyone to try to improve matters, so that our singers of the future will be as great as those in days gone by.

After Two Years of Peace

By Austin Harrison

After two years of peace, and as the net result of the peace, Europe lies, like a sick giant, in the palsy of decline. There is no reconstruction. The promised land is a nebulosity of greed and vanity, and even the hempen rope that was to have hanged the Kaiser turns out to be a paper illusion, like the great unfunded indemnities of the Peoples. And now, at last, things are beginning to hurt, for life is, after all, a reality, and so among the nations that were once at war the peace is seen to be despair, and in a Gregorian wail of agony men turn to their Maker.

For what? That is at once the difficulty and the problem. We do not know. It is the recoil. Mr. Lloyd-George hyphenates on dope. We are paying the price of Paris, that is the position. The Carthaginian Peace is garnering its fruits, and its incidence is social and economic war. Our diagnosis is clear. What is the prognosis? That must depend more upon the effects of Europe's ulceration than upon her science or intelligence or spirituality, for these are lost remedies, and the mood of mankind is uppermost. The control of civilisation is wrong. Governments no longer possess any resiliency. War and the war mind still obtain. Politicians caught in their own nets, obfuscated by their own vanities, delirious with their own delirations cannot—dare not—make peace. A world groans, sags and vomits. The puny princelings of war-industry look to the left and look to the right, and point at the map. See how we have re-coloured and distempered it! Look, they say, at the new mandatory annexations! Behold our work, more spectacular than Napoleon's, more cataclysmic than Cæsar's! "It is ours, all ours," and when they have so spoken they sink back in their arm-chairs, muted with their own fear.

Fear. That is the word we shall have to seize hold of

to understand the new world of fear created at Paris. They built on the sands of fear. New Europe was to be a victors' monopoly contained and constricted by the bayonet, the enemy low, the victor high, and all around pyramids or block-houses of ice were to be erected—to make the world safe for the exploiters. And so the ramp on paper began. We have now had two years of our fun. Incredible fortunes have been made by speculators and others with a fancy for the sublimities of the exchanges. In this country the public apparently thought we had suddenly grown fabulously rich. Our two years of inflation have deflated the Peace of Versailles into limbo. As peace slowly returns, and the sun comes out, our pyramids of ice are seen to melt back into the water of their origin. And now? Now, Cæsar on his pyramid here, Napoleon on his cock-horse there, Lord Jumbo of Hampstead or Pongo of Mesopotamia—these gentlemen find their foundations to be somewhat slippery. The ice is melting. Our gold has gone to the New World. Our great super-production patriotism is seen to be a myth, because the silly "gents" at Paris forgot that to sell, others must be able to buy. All around, the world is upside down. Everywhere the women and children in Europe are dying of starvation. Everywhere unemployment has begun to threaten production. Europe cannot trade. Cannot buy or sell. The blessings of peace are to-day manifested in wholesale European hunger; wholesale European poverty; wholesale European unproductivity; wholesale European death.

Mr. Lloyd-George, surveying his handiwork, casting a contumelious glance at the wreckage of Europe's cosmos, can well afford to fall on his knees before the ikon of his own fatuity, and to the question, "What did you do in the great peace, daddy?" he can glibly reply: "I made Death." It is there. More terrible than war, death is imminent in the peace, the slow lingering death of decay, and in this respect Europe resembles the shambles of Ireland. The creameries of Europe have been "black and tanned." With diabolic ingenuity Europe has been socially, politically and economically insulated, regardless of her economic life, regardless even of the trading requirements

of the victors. Like three jolly schoolboys playing at three jolly pirates, the two gentlemen who squee-jeed Mr. Wilson, treated Europe as if the map were a water-colour impression, and nothing else mattered save the satisfaction of their respective vanities and a dismembership calculated to give cartographers a good year's occupation. They said economics "be damned." Give us the coal, the iron and the oil, and we will "give you a new order."

And so these ingenuous map-makers recast civilisation. How we applauded! The Coalition was "divine." A masterpiece, our Prime Minister! Houses?—Here they are galore. Money?—Here it is in pails-full. Power?—We are the elephantiasis of power. Security?—our credit. Credit?—our paper. And into this orgy of ineluctable megalomania a little book appeared dealing with the relativities of space, which for the nonce seemed prophetic, like a white cross flashed across the heavens. Were our measurements wrong? For a moment it shook our fundaments. Was our circle incomplete? Had we definitively girdled the world? But it was only a jar. Crash fell the scimitar of Paris upon the questioners. "We are." For two years we have been . . . . ?

Bankrupt dreamers, that is all. Bankrupt in policy, bankrupt in kind, bankrupt in heart. To-day we must bear the consequences. We can no longer doubt this phenomenon. We dare no longer play with it. The Bankers are getting nasty, afraid of the overdrafts. Industry is uneasy, unable to unload. Credit is unhappy, lacking a polarity. The pyramids of power are melting! The sun is coming out again. The ramp, the saturnalia of prices and wages, profits and credits, is coming to an end. We stand before the chasm of insanity. Shall we step in, or step back for the long and safe spring?

Let us examine the position of super-production based on pyramids of frozen power. It is very simple. What we have destroyed is the law of abundance—supply and demand; and Europe's troubles are merely the derivative consequences of a peace which ignores economics for a

political map of hate. They, our masters, told us that (1) prices would fall automatically with production; that (2) credit would rise automatically with interchange of commodities; that (3) gold would restore the old parities of exchange, which is the indicator whereby trade is made international and harmonious; that (4) peace would usher in a climacteric of love and prosperity. Nothing of the kind has happened, because the diagnosis was false, like the promise of the £23,000,000,000 indemnity of the Prime Minister. On the contrary, prices have risen, and will rise because at Paris / politicians created a manufactured shortage of production, coupled with a constriction of distribution, thereby paralysing industry and the basic law of economics. We have reached the end of credit, which is to-day no longer fundable. The exchanges are growing worse, because (1) there is no peace, (2) there is less production, (3) there is a controlled distribution. In a word, when politicians killed the goose they smashed their own markets, trade being international in its function and credit international in its mechanism. And so, what we find to-day is not peace, it is war. It is not a higher distribution, a greater supply, a keener demand; what we have is a Europe which cannot produce; which cannot buy or sell; which cannot obtain credit; which therefore is incomparably poorer productively than before the war; which actually cannot possibly support its own populations; which is doomed to stagnation and decline.

The Balkanisation of Europe politically might have stood the test of a decade or so, but the Balkanisation of Europe economically, as ordained at Versailles, spells inevitably death, for what has been done is to lower Europe's purchasing-power; to split up and devitalise Europe's industrialism; to deflect the flow of distribution; to render trade and economic prosperity the national and imperial prerogative of a political group. Political economy is thus the world's problem. From an academic abstraction, it has become a positive compulsion, a thrilling predicament, a cosmic romance. More. It has become a world social point of revolution. What we have won in the war is really the end of the old economic order. We can test this over Germany, who was to have been the milch-cow of recupera-

tion. To-day only an ignoramus can pretend that any sum can be obtained from a Germany (1) which cannot feed herself, (2) which has lost 40 per cent. of her coal, her iron and her raw materials, (3) which has no credit or parity of exchange, and cannot have in existing conditions, (4) which finally cannot produce because she cannot acquire either fuel to feed her industries or the material to work upon: which, in fact, must discard some fifteen millions of her population if she is to live as an entity at all. Had politicians possessed a grain of economic sense, they would have clipped German militarism but restored German industrialism, by which means alone Germany can pay an indemnity. As it is, Germany has since the armistice vastly increased her paper unfunded debts. She has to-day a million unemployed, and two millions only partially producing. Her money is depreciating internally to such an extent that only the man who cultivates the soil can speak of wealth, thus nearing the revolutionary point of France, which culminated in the refusal of the *assignats*. That, of course, is true Bolshevism. It means that Germany is heading straight for a collapse, for Moscow: and that means that the purchasing-power of Europe is declining rapidly into conditions of insolvency. And with Germany is associated Austria, which literally is living on charity, and the whole network of the new little empires, who have all erected barriers of economic tariffs, dislocating the mechanism of distribution, each seeking to cripple the industry of the other, the whole drifting hopelessly and fatalistically into chaos and economic breakdown.

The tragedy of the situation is that pre-war industrial Europe could not feed herself, but lived on the law of abundance. That law no longer operates. The result is that Europe finds herself over-populated, unable to feed or find work for her peoples, because to-day she is a poor Europe politically cut off from the reservoir of supplies and the mechanism of credit, and if this condition persists millions of Europeans must die or emigrate to the New World. There is no escape from this condition of the Versailles peace. The economics of Europe are so fantastic to-day that, to cite a few examples, it is cheaper

to bring coal from America into Germany than to obtain it from Teschen, a few hundred miles away. In Northampton the shops are discharging hands in the boot trade, whereas in Germany there is a glut of boots. The fabulous price of paper is due to the complete stoppage of paper-making in Germany and Austria. Here we have a bad slump in motor-cars, in Germany there are no cars. Sugar is at its present price because the beet industry of Central Europe has been destroyed. Sopwiths go into liquidation because Europe cannot buy their bicycles, etc. On all sides, the phenomenon is seen of super-production here, starvation there. Those who would buy cannot, consequently those who could sell cannot sell. And over it all is the collapse of credit, and the nightmare of unfunded national and foreign indebtedness. To say that capital is reeling is not enough. Capital is actually destroying itself through monopolist expropriation, *vide* the price of petrol, paper, food, raw material, etc., and a deliberate policy of disjointed distribution. Europe no longer has a *de facto* purchasing-power. Even the neutral countries are caught in the cycle of inflation. After two years of peace, the currencies of Europe reflect the true position of bankruptcy which faces Europe, and to such a pass has this depreciation gone that to-day a rise in the exchange of a nation implies that it cannot export, a fall that it cannot import. The super-production point of an unscientific policy has reached its climax in—slump. We cannot sell because Europe cannot buy. Thus the relationship between population and capital is the burning question of Europe, and the problem is no longer one of boundaries and indemnities, armies and victories, it is the economics of the whole; the question, that is, whether under the Peace of Versailles Europe is to go bankrupt and to reduce her impoverished populations by 40 per cent., or whether industrial Europe is to be re-born, to be salved and shriven in her own wretched despite.

Since the armistice we have lived on empirical platitudes drawn from the vocabulary of a hundred years ago, when Europe was not an industrial organism, and boundaries were the playthings of kings. It did not matter then to the workers of Europe economically to which

sovereign they owed allegiance, and credit was in those days an English science. To-day, Europe is a highly-developed industrial organism dependent for food upon its mechanism of credit and exchange, actually dependent for food upon the New World. We learnt that in the war, when without America we should have starved. Hardly a country in Europe is self-sufficient. The key of industrialism being coal, it is obvious that industrial Europe, politically recast to indulge in a coal-war, must perish, and such is the condition confronting her. We who have coal are abusing our monopoly by selling at a gigantic profit to those in need of it, while ourselves dislocating the natural supply of coal of Europe in the centres where it can be productively utilised. There can be no doubt but that, if the Silesian coal is torn from Germany, Germany must decline into a pauper State, which, of course, is the avowed intention of Parisian policy. The question is: Does this matter? Is Germany or German industrialism essential to Europe? The answer is not controversial. It is that, if you pauperise the great free-trade industrial centre of the old Germanic unity, Europe must lose some 40 per cent. of her former productive and distributive power, according to the law of abundance. A great weakness must result as Europe's industrialism declines. In a word, Europe would be far poorer, and as Central Europe could not possibly pay the high wages now demanded, millions would have to die or seek another world.

We have had a Brussels Financial Conference characterised by a Presidential embargo upon all things appertaining to the mosaic laws of the Treaty; characterised also by a proposal made by the Belgian Premier of an issue of gold bonds, which was rejected as impracticable. The sham was apparent from the first. Economics were subordinated to politics. Our maestros of dynamics still regard economics as a secondary consideration, and the result of Brussels is witnessed in a general set-back to all the exchanges. Beaten on Geneva, the Premier seeks another little itinerary as a complement to Spa. It is all wind. Europe's problem remains undiagnosed—untouched. That problem is her depreciating purchasing-power or debased currencies. And that problem is not

politics. It is the only real thing in the capitalist world. It is the only real problem that will survive of the Treaty of Versailles. All the other difficulties are derivative symptoms, from Bolshevism to the "Black and Tans." If Capital cannot produce confidence, capitalism is doomed, but there can be no confidence unless and until Europe's purchasing-power revives. Our monopolist prices here will continue. The social unrest will grow. Misery will come. Unemployment will begin. Production without absorption will be found a chimera. And the process of anarchy will continue until one by one the nations smash and the system as we know it, and industrialism as we seek to preserve it, are involved in the fall. There is not much breathing-time now. Europe cannot Budget, and America will not underwrite. The fruits of the Peace are decay. The world's system is at stake. We shall enter the New Order through peace or war.

Such is the diagnosis frankly enunciated at Brussels, repeated at the Conference recently held in London, known, of course, to all bankers and all men who have in the least studied the facts as they are in Europe awaiting now the sponge or pole-axe of actuality. As a kind of nightlight the League of Nations has moved to Geneva, there to inaugurate no man knows what, seeing that the League is merely the refectory of an Alliance itself centralised in, and dominated by, the rampant militarism of a Parisian junta, which seems to imagine that if it abuses Britain enough in its Press the economics will right themselves. Europe starves because Poland wants to cash her militarism at 1,000 marks to the £. There is no statesman in sight. A tired and apathetic public looks on at its "white-headed" boys in suspense and wonderment, almost as afraid of Mr. Lloyd George as it is of the alternative. And Ireland burns to Carson's Neronian fiddle. Certainly a quaint achievement for a five years' world-war—of freedom. Dr. Lenin grins. Twenty per cent. of Europe's revenue is spent on militarism, yet there is only about enough gold in the world to fund Britain's debt to America. Any offers? The answer is the "three o'clock winner." Europe is racing into bankruptcy. Put your money on the Coalition.

Credit or Bankruptcy

By Austin Harrison

In normal times, faced with bankruptcy, anarchy, and complete social breakdown, Europe would have met in council and—taken steps; first, to discover the ways and means to avoid disaster; second, to apply the needful salving measures, and, in particular, the business world would have pressed such a policy in their own commercial interests. Our Coalition, however, was elected to uphold the Coalition, that is, the Prime Minister, and so to-day there is no balance because there is no opposition; there is no statesmanship because there is no principle or policy; there is no appeal because the country still has the war-mind, and the syndicate Press still regards its function to be propaganda. None the less, Napoleon did not dub us "shopkeepers" for nothing, and so, when the *Matin*, or the "Voice of Paris," indulges in an unusually vitriolic denunciation of Mr. George and Albion, we in Britain can afford to smile, not only on the lie of the facts, but even on the facts of the "lies" which to-day are the manifestations of what Lord Morley would call "reason of State." The truth is that poor France has been too seared, too tried, too wounded to respond to her own truth, and France likewise is not styled "Miss" for nothing—her feline provocativeness is indeed her soul and her fascination. Now, whatever our Prime Minister may be, he is not an evil man, as French journalists suggest; he is the spirit of the day, and when the French denounce him they most pertinently condemn themselves. M. Tardieu may be logical in upbraiding Mr. Lloyd George for trying to escape from the horrible entanglements woven at Paris when the enemy objective was not peace, but the hapless, unsophisticated President of the United States, who tried to reform the world through a looking-glass; and no doubt the Premier deserves the knocks he is now getting, but at least his intentions are

"honourable," and really, if the French don't care what happens to France Mr. George has a right to care for our fate if, tied to the ligaments of Gallic ferocity, we blindly follow the paths of militarism by which France hopes to divide and devitalise Europe. Having myself contested Mr. Lloyd George's seat for the sole purpose of reminding him that we are "shopkeepers," not "Balbrigands," I must defend him against the insults of Parisian newspapers, if only to insist that Napoleon knew more about Britain than M. Millerand, and that what Napoleon did for Europe was to create the modern German Empire through his very policy of dissolution which led through Waterloo to Sedan, and through Sedan to our August break-through in 1918, which won the Great War.

Now, if France wants money out of Germany—and God knows that she does—then France must be circumspect; and again, if she wants merely revenge, then we in our turn must be circumspect, for both policies are not feasible. And that is really the position, and the potential of the Entente. As in war it was "either or," so in the peace it will be "either or"; that is to say, France can obtain some £2,000,000,000 indemnity *in time*, or she can have revenge, which, one need not repeat, means not only disaster to us, but irreparable disaster to civilisation.

The case of France is desperate, financially and militarily. Her population is declining, has been declining for years, and will decline for the same economic reasons that now must control the birth-rate throughout all Europe. But that is an historical argument; not so, however, the financial problem of France, which is absolutely a farce. Had M. Clémenceau been really far-seeing, he would have banked on Mr. Wilson, who would then have let France off her debt, and induced America to underwrite French policy, even the mandatory system of Imperial expropriation. But by fooling Mr. Wilson, France lost American money, and it is as certain as anything in life can be that in November a Republican President will be elected to maintain a stand-off American policy: which fact —and it will control—involves us so directly that auto-

matically we assume America's position in Europe, we being the sole fighting nation potentially solvent, and the only Power whose bankers' credit matters two cents.

Are the French going to attempt now to fool Mr. George as they fooled Mr. Wilson? It looks like it. The Polish war is entirely France's doing; the new Balkan entente is entirely the result of French militarism; the falling purchasing-power of Europe is entirely the fault of France, who refuses to allow peace in Europe; the crime committed against Russia is due solely to France; the D'Annunzio coup is merely the reaction of Italian annoyance at France's cupidity; the high prices and outrageous profiteering in Europe are the immediate fruits of French policy, which will not permit Europe to produce or buy and sell; the stagnation of the League of Nations is simply caused by France's refusal to give power to any such League or idea; the resentment of America is the direct reaction to a France who aims at playing Louis XIV. on a Budget which she cannot balance even with an international loan. These are facts. It is idle to equivocate. If permitted to continue, the conditions caused by this French policy of pauperisation must end in a crash such as the world has never known, financial, social and economic.

It is inconceivable that French politicians do not know this. They do. But the truth is, they do not care. In their exhilaration they have become reckless, fatalistic. They have stopped thinking: they just expect. They hope to bend Mr. George to their will; to force Britain to pay and to fight for a policy which means the direct and utter shattering of the economic structure of industrial Europe. The question for Britain is thus purely economic. Shall we participate; or shall we, counting the consequences, ourselves assume the direction, and in the process some measure of cultural responsibility? I have no sort of doubt as to the answer, because it is a shopkeeper's interest, and it will be answered accordingly, though whether Mr. Lloyd George will be the man to give the lead is another matter. For our strength is credit, the basis of which is confidence; now, if Europe is to be re-

grouped for war, not only physical but economic—and Europe is so re-grouped—there can be no peace, no restoration, and no alternative to all-round bankruptcy which America will naturally keep clear of.

We are therefore placed before the simple choice of credit or bankruptcy; militarism or reconstruction—*i.e.*, fighting-power or purchasing-power. The fighting-power is clearly illusionary, for there is no enemy to fight. On the other hand, the purchasing-power is real politics, because without it all the nations must decline into a European *Völker-Wanderung*, or a mass emigration to those parts of the globe where men prefer warmth and sanity to poverty and a death's-head glory.

And so real is this question, so pressing its incidence, so frightful its prospects that, whether France agrees or not, Britain will have to decline the Field-Marshal's way for the tradesman's course of fair returns, seeing that we live on exports, and that if we cannot greatly increase those exports we shall not be able to feed our own people who won the war for democracy. For us, the problem is food *versus* exports, that is trade, which implies peace, and the harmonious interchange of commodities. France may not see this quite in the same light, but actually France is upheld to-day by British credit, and if our credit weakens nothing can prevent France also from reeling into a financial *impasse* which even her prodigious present-day export of rouge will not serve to modify.

Perhaps the most remarkable fact in Europe, as the result of the war, is the extraordinary hallucination of politicians and public that a poor Europe is calculated to enrich the two Powers who have enforced this condition, for they, too, will grow poor precisely in proportion with Europe's economic weakness, and as both Britain and France are now debtor nations, and cannot finance on their respective colonies, it stands to reason that only a single policy can possibly regenerate a system which stands or falls on its own mechanism. That is why a Europe deliberately weakened and impoverished to serve the military purposes of France, not only must decline, but must crash, and I

question whether any serious economist in Europe would venture to dispute this. For us, therefore, our course is preordained. It is trade and credit. But to hold that position Europe must have peace—real peace. Europe must be helped or she will collapse. In a word, the Treaty will have to be revised, lock, stock and barrel, as, in fact, it is being revised, being too utterly ridiculous even to argue about.

So far as Germany is concerned, we can do two things. Let things rip until she repudiates; or give her a few years' grace to recover; provide her with long credits; repeal the slave economic clauses of the Treaty and, if we really want money out of her, we shall have to see that she gets her pre-war amount of coal and raw materials, failing which an indemnity will remain mere electioneering tosh too stupid even to worry about. That is all. France aims at Germany's break-up, and Paris refuses to fix a sum for reparation, for Paris hopes to force imperial Germany asunder through economic and starvation pressure. That is, of course, why M. Millerand refuses Geneva. France wants to occupy the Ruhr Valley, and split Bavaria from the North, which she thinks she can do by impoverishing the industrial North while buttering the agricultural South, until at last the Germans break away in a confederation, under the ægis of France, on the model of the Corsican.

This is the real reason why Mr. George is attacked by French newspapers, and why for two years Europe has been turned into a howling wilderness of racial and religious antagonisms. It is a vain ambition. America will not finance it, and we cannot, and had we a statesman France would be told flatly that an Entente on those Hannibalistic lines is not to be had. She will be told soon. In the meanwhile all will depend upon whether our Prime Minister can brace himself to find a policy, in place of mere opportunist jerks and furtive attempts to evade the clauses of his own Treaty.

For us, Ireland remains the acid test of political sagacity, and until we give the Irish the full measure of Dominion Home Rule we shall find, *pace* Lord Robert

Cecil, that the world will laugh at the League of Nations, for that way is sham, and no League can speak, even if it provides 50,000 cigars, seriously to D'Annunzio while we let loose a gang of experts to spread terror in Ireland. Similarly with Russia and Poland. We have allowed one of the weakest Powers in Europe to arrogate to itself an imperial sovereignty ludicrously beyond its capacities and potentialities, and in the act we have revived all the old Russo-Polish antagonisms and the war-point of Eastern Europe. Europe has more war grievances to-day than at any period since Napoleon. The Paris Treaty has simply honeycombed Europe with hatreds and animosities, and when that Europe determines to redress the wrongs, we most certainly will not fight, and as France's credit declines neither will she be able to. To expect America to finance Europe as she is, the cockpit of at least a dozen wars, is childish. Mr. Lloyd George knows that, hence, of course, his belated endeavours to persuade the French to be at least financially reasonable, efforts which, emanating from the joint author of the Treaty, are hardly likely to be successful.

And so there we are. What is to be done? Two things clearly. One is for Liberalism and Labour to form a Coalition for the purpose of acquiring a decent Parliament, and a Government of some principle and dignity. The other is to tell France that, just as in war we placed ourselves under French generalship, so now in peace France must submit to our direction, we at least being able to see over the thickets of hate and fear which at present blind Parisian politicians. Then we could get on. Otherwise we shall just continue sauntering downhill, getting deeper and deeper into the morass, settling nothing, doing nothing, except weakening the purchasing-power of all and promoting European revolution. That may be the only way out. I can hardly think so, because it is entirely unnecessary, so that unless the Gods really mean us to go mad, reason should assert itself betimes, and economics. There must come a time when men will do more than wonder at the high prices, the staggering rates, the futility of life as it is to all but the rich, and when they learn, as they are already suspecting, that these prices are

simply the result of a non-productive Europe and the elimination of competition, and that the workers of the world have no intention of returning to a purely lowest wages condition, things will no doubt begin to move towards a European peace, by which means alone we shall progress into the new social and economic order. For the old order is dying fast, withering away through its own insufficiency. We surely did not fight this war to make Europe safe for blight and misery. In present conditions we must all decline. We require a leader, but first of all we must get back to facts and fundamentals, and face them with that British sanity which has withstood through history all tests. The spirit and intelligence of the country will emerge from their tents. Then we shall lead once more through example, and the war will not have been fought in vain.

The Night

(To G. E. R.)

By Henry Williamson

AGAINST the deep blue of the sky a little money spider was taking a line from one veined ash leaf to another. Although so small, he was easily seen in the waning light, a dark speck moving with great care. It was evening time, and the vesper hymn of warblers and thrushes, pippits and blackbirds, was all but sung.

Throughout the day the great vibrant waves of sunlight were plangent on the cornfields and rushing with golden swell over the bee-visited hedgerows and green meadows, vitalising the slender grasses and red sorrel growing in beauty with branched buttercups and incarnardine poppy flowers. Slowly the day-tide of summer's light and glory ebbed, the sun swung down from heaven and dipped its lower rim into the ocean. The fields and distant oakwood were bathed in yellow light, and like a golden sand gleaming in the western sunlight as the sea recedes, the ebbing tide of sunlight left its pools among the woods and the hedges. Far away some children were singing as they went slowly homewards through the closed buttercups and daisies, and their careless cries were in harmony with the evening.

I sat on a gate and watched the rooks flying over the elm trees in the village below, where all was peace and quiet. The wind sighed through the hedge: a dead leaf moved listlessly, twirling as the wind spun it every which way. The tissues of the tree's dead lung had decayed and sunk into the earth; the winter had been mild, and the invisible hand, composing and decomposing, had not yet touched the filagree web of its brittle frame. On its parent ash-tree it hung and quivered, never more to respond to the fire of summer.

Gradually the children reached their homes, and no more cries came from the meadow. The little spider

paused half way between the leaves, and hung quiescent. Perhaps some flaw in his architectural scheme was apparent to him, or he feared that the wind of the summer night would destroy his foundation threads. Born only a few weeks before, without tuition or practice, he knew the angles of his pillars, the proportions of his stanchions, the symmetry and balance of his walls. He had watched no honey coloured parent at work, yet within his minute brain were the plans of a perfect system to entangle the smallest flying insects, feeble of wing, that would fall against his web.

The pools of gold about the oaks slowly drained away, and the sky above became bluer in its deepest hollow. Three swifts passed above, wheeling in final flight before creeping to their nests of straw-speck and saliva under the tiles of the church. The songs of the warblers and thrushes as the light drains away, find an echo in the heart of the poet, for they sing of the beauty of summer: the swift's cries belong to the spectral light of the stars and the mystery of infinite space. The swift is the mystic among birds.

The spider moved on as the first star shone from the dusky bowl. Maybe his problem was solved, or that he had waited for the beauteous whiteness of Lyra's ray. Slowly he travelled to the leaf he had chosen as a base, paused awhile, and crept back across his life-line. The rooks were settled in the elm-tops by the church, and their "caa-caas" came less often; the prospects of the next day's forage among the new potatoes had been discussed thoroughly, and were known to all—in satisfaction the colony had settled down to sleep. Gradually the sun sank into the sea, his furnace fire spreading its broad glow through the cloud strata over the far horizon. One by one the stars crept into their places, waiting for the queen-moon to lift her head above the hills of Exmoor. Antares shone on high, and Aquila, Sagitta, the Pleiades, and all the heavenly concourse: Mars glowed red, with Spica Virginis swung low in adoration and sending its wan green fires through the eternity of space. Slowly the sun was drenched in the grey waters, an owl quavered in loneliness as it fanned over the churchyard; a jackdaw answered sharply, querulously, and night had come to the earth.

A dim glow over the Exmoor hills, a halo of faint light,

and the rim of the moon appeared, like the head of a great yellow moth creeping from its chrysalis. The glow became a sheen of gold-dust as it moved higher; an instant only, and it was free of the dark hills, sweeping upwards into the concave of heaven. The great alchemist dwelling with the spirit of Night changed her from gold to silver as she passed among the stars: the sky became lavender coloured, the moon dust falling with the dew and forming a gauzy veil above. The boom of the waves pounding the distant headland was borne on the wind burthened with foam-fragrance and the scent of the sweet clover fields beyond the village. It stirred the green corn, came fitfully, then sighed to silence.

The last labourer left the inn and the village slept. The walls of the cottages gleamed white under the dark thatch as the moonlight fell directly upon them. I was alone with the sapling wheat and all was still.

I was alone with the wheat that I loved. Moving over the field my feet were drenched in an instant by the dew that had fallen. Lying at full length on the earth, I pressed my face among the sweet wistfulness of stalks, stained and glowing as with some lambent fire, pale, mysterious. On each pale flame-blade depended a small white light, a dewdrop in which the spilt plashings of the moon were held in thrall. Each flag of wheat held the beauty of pure water, and within their sappy blades glowed the spirit of the earth—in the spectral silence a voice spoke of its ancient lineage: of the slow horses that had strained at the wooden plough through the ages, scarring the glebe in long furrows that must be sown with corn; race after race of slow horses whilom moving in jangling harness, and to the deep shouts of the heavy men. Generation after generation of men, bent with age and unceasing labour, plodding the earth, sowing the yellow grains that would produce a million million berries for mankind. Spring after spring, each with its glory of blue-winged swallows speeding, wheeling, falling through the azure, the cuckoo calling on the hills, and the larks spinning their silvern threads far up into the sunshine. Through all the sowings and the reapings for thousands of years the wheat knew that it was grown for man, and the soul of the wheat grew in the knowledge of its service. Lying there on the cool couch

of the silver-flotten corn, with the soft earth under me, sweet with its scent of stored sunbeams, the beauty of the phantom wheat carried me away in a passion of sweet ecstasy. Faint as the sea-murmur within the shell, the voice of the corn came to the inward ear. Ever the same was the earth that it knew, the east washed with faint rose-water in the dayspring, the lark-flight loosened upon the bosom of the dawn wind, and the golden beams of the sun shooting over the hills of the morning. It seemed but a moment since the wild men had goaded the sullen oxen, and with rude implements torn a living from the earth; all the great power of the wheat rested above the growing corn now, of kin to the grains beaten by oxen, and later, by the flails of the wretches who were ever hungry.

The moon swung its silver lamp among the Pleiades, the distant roar of the surf floated from over the clover fields, and still I lay there, one with the Maker of Life . . . a white mistiness flapped in front, beating broad pinions as it hovered, it dropped to the earth, and a shrill scream trembled into the night. Fluttering like a moth, the ghostly barn owl struggled with the rat, held it in a remorseless clutch by its powerful talons. Into the wheat field the rat had come, urged by instinct to seek the means of life, and he had found only death. Dreamily the owl fanned the night with his broad wings—wings more beautiful than any bejewelled fan—and then floated away to his nest in the loft of a cottage near the church. Saddened by the consciousness of life's tragedy—every form of life depending for existence on the death of another form—I walked towards the village, while a corncrake began his jarring love-song in the far corner of the field, and the little flutter-moths went down to drink the honey of the night opening flowers, living their short life while the moon, soon to die, was in its fullest beauty. And only the wind sighed through the hedge when I paused to listen : the wind that was banished of olden time and condemned to wander round the earth, gathering, mayhap, the soul-flames of those broken by the irony of all earthly endeavour.

The Decline of Literary Criticism

By Thomas Moult

The passion of the average book-reading Englishman to learn what other people are writing about the books he hopes to read has now reached an ironic and sterile stage. A little while ago, the critical pronouncements of our literary weeklies were of definite assistance to the reader in forming an opinion of the worth of new publications; most of us, indeed, are able to look back at (and sigh for) the days when a critical notice in which some book or other received favourable regard was a guarantee of the selling-out of a whole edition during the first few days following the appearance of the notice. Even in the year before the war there existed a Northern bookseller whose habit it was to commence the week's business by ordering up to a hundred copies of a new volume which had been the especial choice and the subject of favourable comment in the local Sunday journal of the previous day. And Mr. Arnold Bennett's weekly causerie in *The New Age* is known to have made an even more practical impression. But at the present moment, by all accounts, although the critical essays in the reviews are read with as great an enthusiasm as they were ever, their tone makes no appreciable difference to the practical life of the books themselves. In other words, the recommendation is received attentively, respectfully, and thereafter entirely ignored!

One supposes that the publisher's statement must be accepted when he tells us that advertisement and criticism alike are merely useful in keeping his name before the public, and as a record of his publications; but it is difficult to believe that the columns upon columns of critical letter-press spread before us every week can be so drastically futile as that. "A book begins to sell when it is talked about," is the usual official opinion on the subject, but a

publisher must be a pretty poor hand at his business if, in face of that belief, he is still ready to pay ten, fifteen, or twenty guineas for a page-sized advertisement in one or other of the literary journals. It would be far more profitable if he were to arrange that one of his representatives —able to cut a dash at a social function—should be present at every dinner-table, every club gathering, where the books *are* talked about! Or, better still, arrange for the preliminary copies of new publications to get into the hands of the popular West-End hostesses, instead of into those of the impotent critic. There is no better fate, commercially speaking, for the average literary work nowadays than to become a fashion among folk whose chief aim in existence is to follow a fashion. Although, artistically speaking, there is no fate which is deadlier; but, in these days of degenerate aspiration, that, we regret to say, is of little consequence.

Another paradoxical element in the matter is that contemporary writers are just as anxious for favourable notices of their books as ever writers were. Indeed, all the manifestations go to suggest that literary criticism ought to be especially powerful at the present day. When a writer professes sublime indifference to the fact that opinions are being expressed, or will sooner or later be expressed, by the critics on his work, that writer may safely be classified as one who either believes that you thoroughly misunderstand him or as one who thoroughly misunderstands himself. No writer worth his salt has ever been anything but profoundly susceptible to the smiles or frowns of his contemporaries. That men, even the artists, are social beings, is a truth from which we can never get away, even though it may sometimes be a misfortune. We come, therefore, to a recognition of three things: that the critical journals *are* being read; that authors *are* concerned with whatever the critical journalists choose to say about their writings; and that the critical journal is still a valuable link between the three individuals concerned in the issue of a book. And yet, withal, there was never a period of letters in which criticism wielded less influence over the reading of intelligent men.

To say that the disappearance of the personal pronouncement in literary criticism—its disappearance in spite

of the custom of signed essays—has done a good deal to bring about this puzzling state of affairs would not be to ignore altogether the fact that the most influential phase of English criticism is that in which anonymity was the rule —though, of course, the great reviews of a hundred years ago gave in themselves personality to the anonymous critic in their pages. And even then the most influential personage of all was well known to be Leigh Hunt. He had a definite following which, his lean years notwithstanding, never fell below the highest number that any one of the critical reviews of our own day is able to count for itself. Later came George Henry Lewes, Matthew Arnold, and the other Victorians, preserving a sort of semi-anonymity, but in each case the personality seems to have been so distinct, so vital, that the appendage of a signature to impress the readers was hardly needed. The question of whether or not a new Arnold would be powerful enough to make his own conditions were he to appear at this point of the present situation is interesting, but only incidentally. One would first have to show that the times, which are certainly devoid of personality in other spheres, any longer require a Matthew Arnold. And then we would have to prove that it is not the conditions that make the Arnolds. It was certainly the conditions, the presence of militaristic activity in Europe, that gave rise to Napoleon Buonaparte. He could not easily be imagined for a state of Utopian peace.

It is safe, however, to regard as impossible the return of practical influence to criticism, so long as there is no personality compelling enough in the same (and yet how different!) sense that the personality of Mr. Bottomley is compelling enough with a million readers that they will, at his mere utterance, purchase cheap fountain pens, believe in the innocence of a murderer, in the roguery of a respectable member of Parliament, and boycott the efficient German for the inefficient English watering-places with undiscriminating cheerfulness. But it must be a personality so honestly powerful that the current suspicions of cliquishness, self-interest, favouritism, and the other deadly rogueries shall be relegated to Coalition politics, their proper sphere. Its honour must be so infectious that the advertisement pages no longer have the least influence on the tone of the criticism itself. It will even compete

with the libraries for the deciding word in the fate of new books. What the current influence of the libraries is may be gauged by that of their prototype in the world of the drama, the theatre agencies, which can easily ruin a worthy play if it does not appeal to their first-night taste, by the simple procedure of forgetting to purchase the usual block of seats! We had an example of this the other evening in *The Crossing*, which was well received by the critics, which was in its way a beautiful piece of work—*but not commercial enough.* It was played for the remainder of the one week of its run to empty benches . . .

That such a return of influence, exercised by some one personality, is desirable may be doubted by many folk; but, after all, personality *is* literature. An enlightened and respectful democracy will, by the time of that return (we should hope), have replaced the present bureaucratic state in which everyone believes, not that Jack is as good as his master, but that the master, being himself, is no worse than Jack. The consequence to literature of this belief is that we have come to regard the pronouncement of any anonymous reviewer's three lines in a morning picture-paper as of equal importance with that of the genuine critic who has served some sort of apprenticeship to his trade, who is at least aware that every imitator of Mr. Thomas Hardy is not necessarily a "second Hardy," even though his critical training be not so advanced as to appreciate that the sacred books of the Aryan race were not merely the Greek and Latin, but the Indian, Zoroastrian, and Scandinavian; or, as a writer in a contemporary is kind enough to remind us, that the "literary" history of Europe since the Renaissance is a mere interval between the highest culture of the past and the highest culture of an epoch that is yet to come! Unfortunately, the publisher himself makes no distinction of late between genuine criticism and the three-lined notice; if he did we should not have the unpleasant spectacle of self-respecting firms sandwiching a quotation from the *Athenæum* or the *Times Literary Supplement* between the brazen boostings of the *Puddleton Express* and the *Licensed Victuallers' Gazette.*

Charwomen, not "Balbrigands"

By John Peeler

SWIFTLY now, drifting with the anarchy of the time, Ireland is moving towards a situation involving not only the honour but the justification of British civilisation. The Premier may sneer at Sir Horace Plunkett, "unable to defend his creameries"—words which will go down in history for their hypocrisy and brutal callousness; Parliament may guffaw at the plea of Mr. Bottomley to release the Lord Mayor of Cork; England may still affect indifference to the fate of the Irish—Ireland is and will remain our test, our civilising example, and if we fail there, assuredly we shall fail in Europe and within our own Empire.

Modern history nowhere, except perhaps in Armenia, can show a more hideous picture of Christian misrule than that of the secret junta at the back of Dublin Castle, where Viscount French resides in mournful state, a prisoner. It is a sorry end for the man who led the Army at Mons. We are back in the days of mediæval sectarianism, in which even torture is resorted to. Yet Viscount French of Ypres does not resign. The Prime Minister speaks of "human nature." The world chuckles.

Now, if Sir Nevil Macready's Black and Tans shot up every town in Ireland, does any man imagine that the problem would be settled? If every Sinn Feiner were hanged on London's lamp-posts, should we have found a solution? If starved down into Carsonian "loyalists," would Ireland cease from troubling? Quite the contrary. There have been various rebellions since Cromwell sacked Drogheda. The Irish problem will not be settled by military anarchy, because it is now not only a genuine national democratic issue, it is not only a dual sectarian feud, it is a dual Catholic struggle in which political Rome and Ulster equate as policemen.

Any time since 1914 Ireland could have been settled, but Carson, on the one hand, and Jesuitism* on the other, have prevented a Nationalist solution, and what we find to-day is not so much the terrorism of Ulster as the implacable veto of political Rome to Irish National ambitions. To a statesman Ireland presents an extraordinarily attractive problem, because in reality Sinn Fein is in line with the natural evolution of British imperialism, and had we a prescient imperialist, like Disraeli or even Mr. Chamberlain, we should find no difficulty in helping the Irish to the Dominion status, seeing that in Irish freedom not only would the age-long sectarian feud dissolve, but Ireland, as a nation, must stand as an economic unit on the bed-rock of British interdependence. To talk of military exigencies to-day is unmilitary, *i.e.*, unscientific, as every educated soldier and sailor knows. The truth is that to settle Ireland we must be prepared to deal with both Churches; any donkey can play the policeman, to play the Hun there is the measure of our bankruptcy.

If the Catholics connive at terrorism at the expense of their own flock, why should the Englishman who hates the very name of Ireland bother? Why should Thomas, who supports a dissenting denomination, worry if Catholic shoots Catholic; if here Catholicism denounces Sinn Fein while there it upholds it; if, in a word, the real bar to a Nationalist or autonomous Ireland is not Carson, is not English apathy, is politically and physically the Roman Catholic hierarchy which foresees in a free Ireland the end of Papal authority in Ireland. That is the true problem, and it will never be solved by a George, a Cecil, or a policeman, unless and until we, in our own world interests, smash up, not the creameries and the villages of the island, but the casuistries and causalities of Ireland's blood exacerbations.

Are those interests compelling enough to attract us? They are. America or credit, the League of Nations, our imperial attachments, our markets—these are arguments we cannot blow aside with a sneer or a guffaw, and every

* Rome, which thinks England is reverting to the Apostolic Church, naturally resents the democratic tendency of Ireland to free herself on an agnostic bias. And Mr. Lloyd George actually plays up to this snag. Alas! poor Oliver!

month we delay our world difficulties will increase, because with a diseased body in our midst there can be no truth in us here or abroad.

Ireland is an artist's problem. It is not really Ireland, it is the Catholic Church that is the issue, and every creamery burnt down by Protestant Black and Tans works not for Sir Edward but for those who would keep Ireland a priest-ridden country under the educational authority of Rome.

We are shooting up the wrong end, that is the sickening tragedy of this farce, and had we a sense of the sublime or the ridiculous, or any gleam of far-reaching statesmanship, we should just walk out, Scottish pipes playing, and leave the Irish to themselves, on the understanding that any attempt at a civil sectarian war, no matter by which sect started, would be put down in the interests of civilisation. It would not be Carson who would look the saddest at such a stroke of statesmanship, it would be the rival Church, and, of course, the small gang of assassins whose game is anarchy. Have we no politician with a sense of humour, an eye for real sport? What a master of wisdom Mr. Lloyd George would prove himself were he to put charwomen in Phœnix Park in the place of helpless but infuriated policemen, and bring back Valera on a torpedo-boat, and bid Sinn Fein elect its first Diet!

Ireland would click into order within a month. American capital would pour into the island, and Irish industries would revive, like mushrooms, to our material advantage. Why don't we do this thing? We could always reconquer Ireland again, if thought necessary to win an election. Why don't we at least attempt to do something positive, if only to prove our sincerity to a mocking universe?

To settle Ireland strategy is necessary, not force. Charwomen in Phœnix Park, the Black and Tans to build houses, and let the Irish talk it out in their own elected Diet, in Gaelic, if they can. Let them have what we gave to the Boers with so magnificent a success, and then let us meet them at a round-table conference—field-marshals and lawyers taboo—on the economics of markets and mutual business. Without English purchasing-power, Ireland would starve (I suppose even Mr. Lloyd George knows

that), then, if there is any trouble, send Ireland, like Lithuania or Palestine, up to the League of Nations for sectarian treatment. We shall kill two birds that way, and the League, automatically thus bringing in America, would become a world live force, created and led by Britain.

As for Valera, he would probably be dining with Sir Edward Carson within a fortnight of our first testimony in world sincerity.

When Ghosts Fail

The Crossing.

THOUGH Maskelyne's prestidigitations would seem a perennial joy, the somnambulist ghostliness after the Rev. Vale Owen somehow fell flat in theatre-land, which thus shows that there is more in an illusion than an illusionist. This has been the month's theatrical sensation. Vale Owen is a glorious stunt. *Mary Rose*, which is a fairy tale, is a splendid success. The Grand Guignol delights, but Algernon Blackwood, who knows, who writes about that other bourne with tact, feeling, and psyche-ness, he fails dismally and catastrophically in *The Crossing*, which should have been a winner as ghosts go. But there it is. The ghosts of Blackwood were "sticky." Somehow, the "creepy crawlies" never hopped over the other grasshopper's back; the disciples of Sir Conan stayed away, Fairy Land stayed away, the agents who buy "on spec." did not buy; as between the fairy stuff of *Mary Rose* and *The Crossing*, the art of the novelist was uncashable. Once more the stage points its lesson. It is that London will not tolerate a serious play, even about ghosts.

One is tempted to inquire analytically into the reason of this failure, for were a man to read *Mary Rose* he would find it painfully thin, but were a man to read *The Crossing* he would certainly recognise a grown-up quality which would not bore him. But on the stage, what a difference! Blackwood meant business in ghosts, Sir James meant business on the stage. The latter is master of stagecraft, the former is an intellectual. And here we come to the

core. Blackwood's illusion was reality, Sir James' illusion was—illusion, which is what the public wants. It likes being frightened, but not really frightened; shocked, even emotionalised; but ask it to think, and the spell is broken; the law of London's theatres is entertainment.

The White-headed Boy.

At the Ambassadors we are in Ireland, and there the illusion is complete. There is nothing in the story, but there is art, and in the hands of the Irish players a quite local family *potin* serves to enrapture the public who pay for the Black and Tans, night after night. It is a joyous performance, just real Irish, unthinkable as a play without the accent, without the Irish players, considerably westernised as they have become in their travels, without that unity of production which gives every play they produce the full chance. The author has clearly a sense of the theatre, like the French, and though his pattern is of the lightest and his material a mere flimsy, he knows human nature, and lets the club do the work, as golfers say, with a fine natural swing. We laugh. We cannot help it. Only a cynic would criticise so pretty a bit of mirth. *The White-headed Boy* is a play. And it is successful. Give thanks in our time for that.

The Great Lover.

This, we know, was a "knock-out" American success, a thing that ran for years. The title gives it away. The key-note is emphasis. Construction, presentation and technique are of the old heavy theatrical kind. It is a costume play; an actor's play; it is meant to put Don Juan across the footlights, and crash home. As melodrama, it is not bad, but it is very old stuff, quite wooden in texture, pompously and conventionally conceived to suit a public which goes to the theatre to see itself as it would like to be, were real life not so entirely otherwise. This play requires an actor, and fortunately in Maurice Moskovitch the banalities of the theme receive large and powerful treatment. He fills the stage. He has moments of genuine drama. He compels admiration. He almost makes us believe in the play in which more doors open and shut than in any other I can remember. This is the kind of stuff which draws the money, though the love is purely

fictitious and the lover is essentially a convention, and the women-folk are mere door-mats for the great figure to strut upon. But anything great is good, especially a lover—and so no doubt women will go to see how the male does it and men will go to see how the women take it. Of course, it is fantastically old-fashioned, and the leading lady has an absurd part, which even the ridiculously ugly latest frocks, worn with the latest wriggles, cannot redeem. We simply don't care what happens to the ladies. Our focus is the lover. Will he end up a sentimentalist? He ends beautifully on—the telephone. No need to weep. He is going to have another affair.

Now, Blackwood, when he wrote about ghosts, should have thought about the public, like the author of *The Great Lover*, for the distinction is vital. In *La Tosca*, the great thrill is obtained off the stage, and in *The Bells*, Irving's triumph, the horror arises from the little clink of bells behind the scenes. So Hamlet's ghost on the parapet. So the immortal knocking at the gate in Macbeth. The moment the thrill is visualised, the illusion vanishes, or becomes merely painful. True horrors or sensations have to be imagined, and so we never see the Great Lover kissing his brides or capturing them; he chucks them under the chin just to show that he can be mortal, otherwise his indiscretions are conspicuous by their absence. Now Blackwood's ghosts walked and talked. They "realised." They crossed over. Instead of frightening, they calmed us. The theatricality jammed. If ghosts can come in and out like that, why read Vale Owen? Why go to the play-house? And so the real psychical drama capsized over the controversial problem of how to write a play. There is money in ghosts, but not in real ghosts. That is to say, the ghosts must somehow be in the audience.

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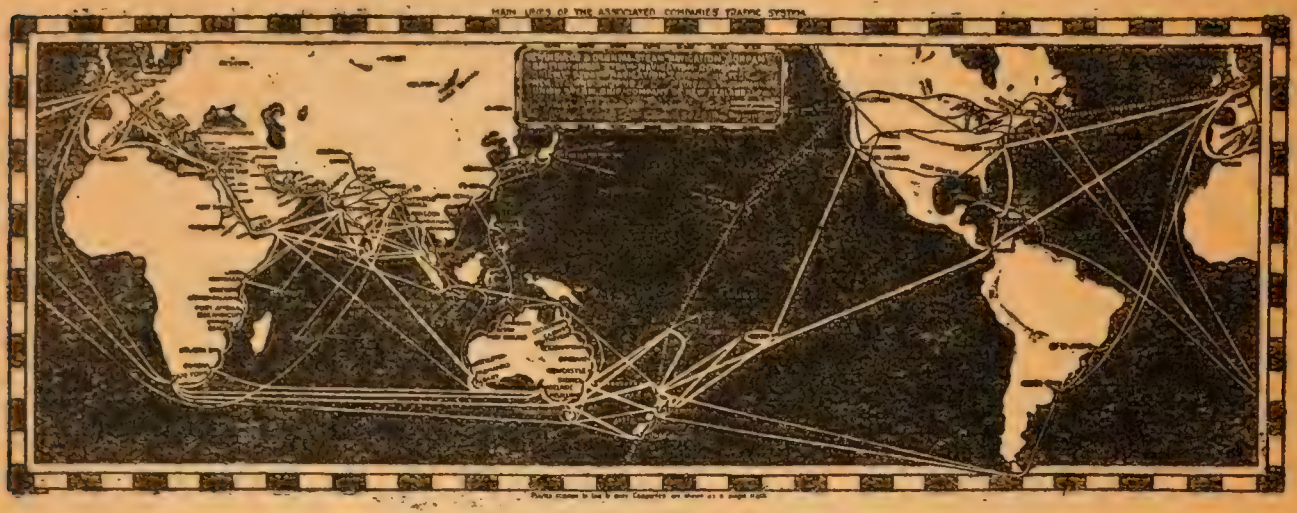

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Books

ESSAYS AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

THEY WENT. By NORMAN DOUGLAS. (Chapman and Hall, Ltd.) 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

A FAWN might have written this graceful, fascinating allegory of modernism and the classicism, part novel, part history, a satire, a poem, a *tour de force* of literary imagery. It is the best thing Mr. Norman Douglas has done, for in this kind of work his knowledge and riotous fancy have free play. It is a philosophy, too, and cuts new ground for the old patterns; for, to be sure, Mr. Douglas is no revolutionary. A ferociously precocious schoolboy might have written it, or a very wise old man. Full of atmosphere, in places amazingly beautiful—how good the opening pages!—the land of princesses conjured up in this book reminds one of Rider Haggard, touched with the wand of the French Academy. Had we such an institution this work would certainly be *couronné*. It will be one of the books of the year, and should be Rackham-ised in a Christmas luxury edition.

BOOKS

FICTION

THE ROMANTIC. By MAY SINCLAIR. Collins, Ltd. 9*s*. net.

IF this is a reminiscence, it is none the less romance, something lived, felt, and re-created, as it were, out of its reactions. Of the women writers to-day, May Sinclair is perhaps the most notably virile in style and expression. She is, in fact, a stylist of her own, which in the modern novel is rare, and she has the real gift of omission. Most women writers would have sentimentalised in a work of this kind, but the author is too intuitively the artist for that. She traces a man's character almost like an essayist, and succeeds in portraying that difficult duality of psychology which in this case takes the form of a romantic passion for courage vested in a natural coward. It is a fascinating study, clear, incisive, suggestive, an extraordinarily complicated achievement in a book so finely chiselled, and, though it is not a love book, it is almost diabolically a book on love. This time the male is not a "movie" hero, but he is a type, and so in *The Romantic* we have a variation on the eternal theme of why men and women love.

POETRY.

AS THE WIND BLOWS. By EDEN PHILLPOTTS. Elkin Mathews. 5*s*. net.

THE MOON. By J. C. SQUIRE. Hodder and Stoughton. 2*s*. net.

THE WOODEN PEGASUS. By EDITH SITWELL. Blackwell. 6*s*. net.

UMBRA. By EZRA POUND. Elkin Mathews. 8*s*. net.

BEFORE us lie four volumes by writers of more or less established reputation, but concerning at least one of them we feel as we read that his reputation is altogether inadequate, at least in this, the branch of art of which his present volume is an expression. Mr. Phillpotts is known to most people as a novelist who has suffered considerably through his inheritance of an intellectual outlook and æsthetic temper similar to Mr. Hardy's. He is known to a few as a writer of verse which for them has reached its highest standard in such poetical prose fantasies as *Evander* and *The Girl and the Faun*. But still fewer regard his verse in itself as one of the serious outcomes of his temperament: and indeed a tendency to lapse into the doggerel which the intellectual verse-writer is apparently unable to avoid would seem to justify the attitude. That is, if the aforesaid lapse accompanied every effort, which it certainly does not. It is true that in his new volume, *As the Wind Blows*, there are such pieces as "Bells of Varenna," a feeble echo of Edgar Allan Poe which we remember to have been first printed in an early volume, *Wild Fruit*, ten years ago :—

Bells of Varenna,
Bells of Varenna,
Ancient bells,
Solemn bells,
Bells,
Bells.

Artistically this means absolutely nothing. Poe's refrain had at least the merit of irresistible music. "There runs a pathway through the wood Where lace the boughs and all is good"—except Mr. Phillpotts's way of saying it: and his rationalist outlook betrays him into such fallacies as that a Dartmoor stream (in an otherwise sound and musical poem) strives above all circumstance to win its "immemorial dream and predetermined plan." It is not the stream that so strives, surely. . . . These and such like lapses make a demand on our reserves of sympathy before we can appreciate at their true worth successful pieces as "In the Valley," "In a Wood," and some rousing dialect ditties. It is a pleasure to be able to pay even this small tribute to one whose own honesty and breadth in his pursuit of an ideal in art have influenced his younger contemporaries more than, superficially, we can estimate.

The Moon is a deceptive piece of workmanship in that its author has adapted a form which in itself imparts a certain musical effect. Mr. Squire has wisely restricted his own share in such music to the subdued note which, rightly belonging to the form, is accentuated by the double close. The total impression is one of overpowering emotion:—

A night there was, a crowd, a narrow street,
  Torches that reddened faces drunk with dreams:
An orator exultant in defeat;
  Banners, fierce songs, rough cheering, women's screams;
My heart was one with those rebellious people,
Until along a chapel's pointing steeple
  My eyes unwitting wandered to a thin
Crescent, and clouds a swift and ragged sheet;
  And in my spirit's life all human din
  Died, and eternal Silence stood within.

This, however, is the outcome of an idea, and not a particularly fresh one at that. Mr. Squire's reputation as a poet seems to us to rest in the last resort on his habit of description; although

Alone and sad, alone and kind and sweet,
But always peaceful and removed and proud

could hardly be phrased in a more thoroughgoing way, be the expression of any kind: nor could his recounting of what men have made of the moon when they have brooded on it:—

Brooded, until they fashioned from thy seeming,
  A lithe and luring queen with fatal breath,
A witch the man who saw might not escape,
  A grave that gleamed in shadowy groves of death,
  The tall tiaraed Syrian Ashtoreth.

In face of the existence already of poems on "Rivers" and "The Birds" we incline to regard *The Moon* as one of those poetical ventures which, as with Keats, sometimes result in definite achievement, and for which there is the adequate sanction of history.

Neither Miss Sitwell nor Mr. Squire would, we imagine, welcome the recognition of certain resemblances in their poetry, but at least in the fact that it is the outcome of an intellectual impulse that resemblance is noticeable. The difference is that Mr. Squire's is

inclined to be rather generous and open-minded, whereas Miss Sitwell's is hard and bright, showing a glittering surface in frozen sunlight, so to speak, and as cold. Only a temperament such as hers could employ words and phrases like "parrot," "monkey," "simian," "the monkey Fanfreluche," so often in the first three poems, and still not think them squeezed too dry (if ever any juice was in them) to use again in the volume whenever she requires a word which seems easily atmospheric.

> Across the fields as green as spinach
> Cropped as close as Time to Greenwich—

it is not by such couplets as this that we must judge Miss Sitwell's true quality, nor by her clever nursery rhymes (of which "The King of China's Daughter" is a decided success). Whenever a poet has thrown over the conventions, lock, stock, and barrel, it ought to be for the one reason that he or she has no further use for them, not because he cannot be at home among them. Miss Sitwell's "Serenade" tells us how much at home she finds herself there, or how little, and consequently how much (or how little) of genuine poetry there is in her volume:—

> The tremulous gold of stars within your hair
> Are yellow bees flown from the hive of night,
> Finding the blossom of your eyes more fair
> Than all the pale flowers folded from the light.
> Then, Sweet, awake, and ope your dreaming eyes
> Ere those bright bees have flown and darkness dies.

Mr. Ezra Pound takes too much for granted. We have an uncomfortable feeling, as we read *Umbra,* which contains all that he now wishes to keep from *Personæ, Exultations, Ripostes,* etc., that we are reading translations far oftener than he signifies. Not only is the outlook entirely alien to the temperament accustomed to express itself in the English tongue, but many of the lines are only to be condoned if they are of poems done from some other language into ours:—

> Damn it all! all this our South stinks peace.
> You whoreson dog, Papiols, come! Let's to music!

When Mr. Pound includes "Alba," with its "Ah God! Ah God! that dawn should come so soon," at the close of each stanza, is he suggesting that Swinburne also was taking too much for granted when he used the same marvellous refrain without acknowledgment to the Provençal balladist? "Alba" is one of the translated pieces that we accept without question. It is a beautiful and poignant work, and well supported by "Dieu! Qu'il La Fait" from Charles d'Orléans. Here are all the qualities of charm and musical phrasing for its own sake that we find in Mr. Pound's original work also:—

> Be in me as the eternal moods
> Of the bleak wind, and not
> As transient things are—
> Gaiety of flowers.
> Have me in the strong loneliness
> Of sunless cliffs
> And of grey waters . . .

How much more we would treasure this powerful fragment if the allusions in the title and elsewhere had not made us feel uncomfortable about it!

SOCIAL.

CONCERNING SOLICITORS. By ONE OF THEM. Chatto and Windus. 6*s*. net.

THE author of this thoughtful little work on solicitors can hardly expect to remain a mystery, for the studious critic can assuredly spot the style of a well-known writer who is a lawyer. It is not a book of anecdotes in the vein of Mr. Bottomley. We are asked to consider the legal profession seriously, and the writer does make a good case, laying stress on the impersonal nature of a solicitor's duties in comparison with the rewards received, which are not monstrous, like fashionable barristers, or, in these necessitous days, enviable. The author is a reformer, but is not for fusion. He recognises change, but does not like it. He stands for the poor, but clearly is a benevolent aristocrat with a passion for human liberty. He writes well, and there is a delightful satirical touch running, *sub rosa,* through the book, which makes one feel that this solicitor is a very ardent fellow who loves the "human comedy."

RADIANT MOTHERHOOD. By DR. MARIE CARMICHAEL STOPES. Putnams, Ltd. 6*s*. net.

"RADIANT" is the word for this continuation of Dr. Marie Stope's philosophy, and surely all about to marry can read this book with profit. In these days, when marriage is apt more and more to be treated as an economic disability rather than a social contract, Dr. Stopes provides a corrective so charming in its presentation that no one could take offence at statements which in a novel would be inadmissible. The truth is, the author sees marriage as a romance. She delights in her literary accouchement of humanity. She treats the union as tripartite, with an eye always on the baby. For masses of women to whom sex, as the result of Puritanism, is a sealed book, who are expecting to be mothers, and no less to youthful husbands, this disquisition on the fruition of wedlock should be really useful, for marriage is to-day on trial, and a new attitude towards love would seem almost indispensable. Indeed, Dr. Stopes is doing for women a Trojan work. She is educating them to understand themselves, particularly her advice to parents how to deal with children, with their inevitable sex curiosity, has a charm which should attract many readers.

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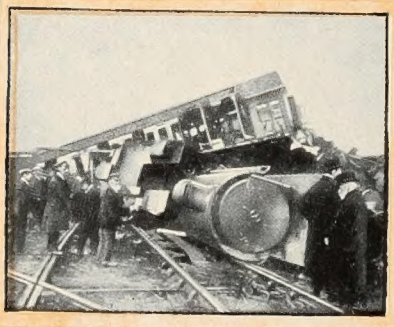

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